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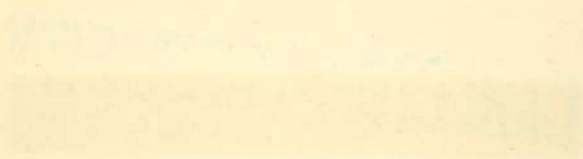
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TERROR OVER YUGOSLAVIA

THE THREAT TO EUROPE

TERROR OVER YUGOSLAVIA

THE THREAT TO EUROPE

by

AVRO MANHATTAN

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WATTS & CO.

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NO KENNELS

To the peoples of Yugoslavia,
of Europe, and of the West,
as a warning ;
trusting that the tragedies of the past,
no less than the hopes of the future,
may soon bind them together
in brotherly love.

PREFACE

WHEN compared with the tremendous economic and military forces now shaking the Earth, religion may seem unimportant. Yet its intangible power, when wielded by an aggressive Church, can be as deadly as that of the ideologies now seeking the subjugation of mankind.

The Catholic Church's unalterable goal—total Catholicization of Europe, of the West, and of the World—is not a chimera. It is one of the gravest realities now threatening contemporary society. Its realization would spell, not only an exceptional mutilation of freedom, but the most ruthless annihilation of all the basic liberties of modern man. This the Catholic Church has already done, in our times, with the promotion of racial, religious, and political persecutions, forcible conversions, and wholesale murder; deeds coolly perpetrated by thousands of her lay and ecclesiastic members. The task of this work is to relate where, when, and by whom such atrocities were committed.

Many will reject what have justly been reckoned the greatest religious massacres of the twentieth century as gross exaggerations, if not pure inventions. They will not be the first to have done so. It took the author almost half a decade of painstaking investigation before he accepted what seemed unbelievable. The result is this account, documented from as authoritative and varied sources as possible, among them people with whom the present writer became personally acquainted. Some of these played no mean role in the religious, political, and military events herein narrated, while others were eye-witnesses, indeed not a few even victims, of the incredible atrocities inspired, sanctioned, and promoted by the Catholic Church.

The portentous significance of what is here described should, therefore, be carefully scrutinized. The forces now

forwarding universal tyrannies are many. One of these, Catholicism, is perhaps the most malignant because appavelled in the mantle of religion. The fact that it is as ready to strike now as in the recent past this book is out to prove with a tale that should never be forgotten. Its reality has already cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Unless checked, it might well cost the lives, no longer of thousands, but, alas, of millions.

AVRO MANHATTAN

London

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Dr. Vladimir Belajcic, former Justice of the Supreme Court of Yugoslavia.

Dr. Branko Miljus, former Minister of Yugoslavia.

Certain members of U.N.O.

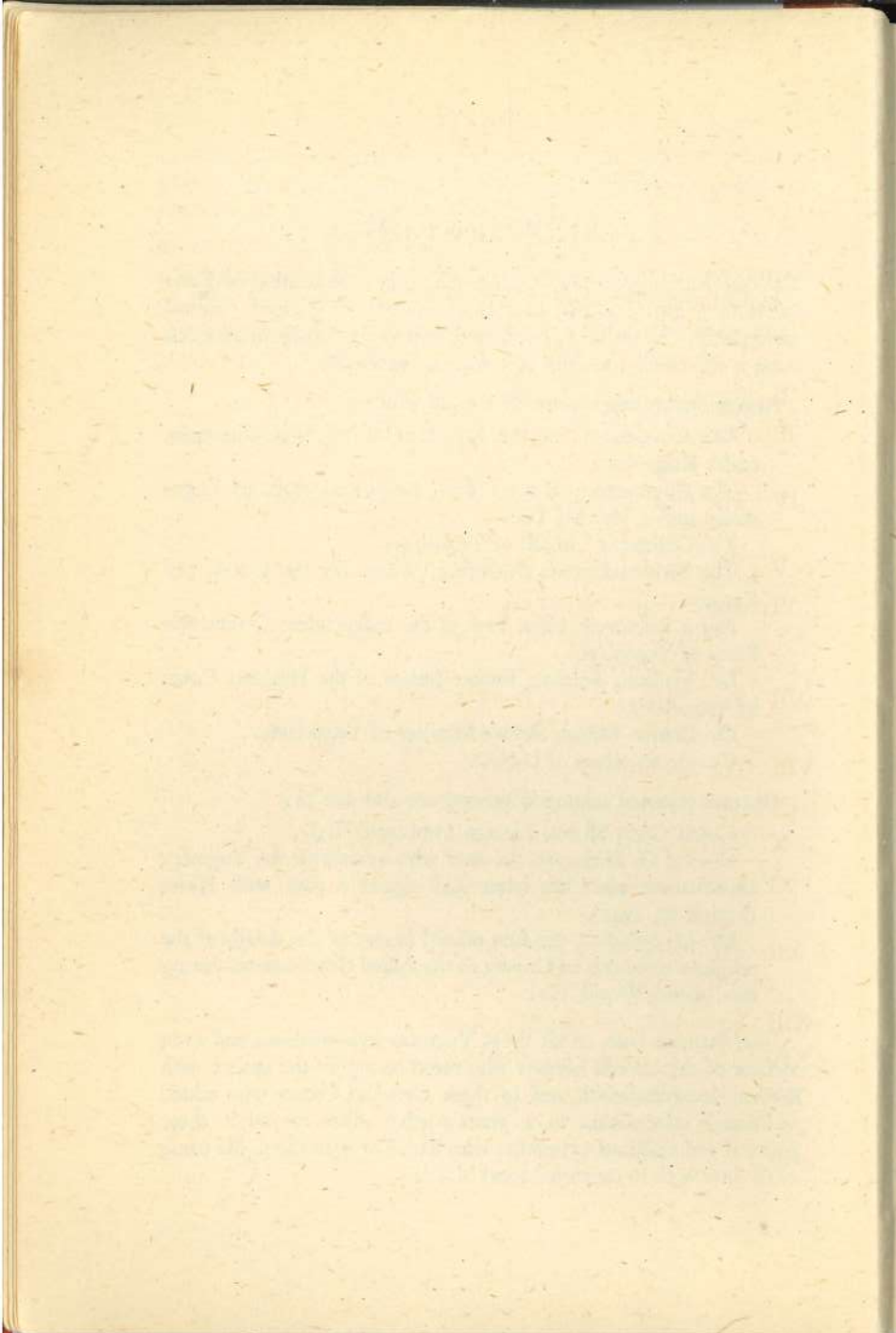
Grateful personal acknowledgments are also due to :

Count Carlo Sforza, Foreign Minister of Italy.

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Last, but not least, to all those Yugoslav eye-witnesses and even victims of the Ustashi horrors who cared to supply the author with further documentation, and to those Catholic Croats who added additional information in a praiseworthy effort to indict those political and religious extremists who dared to stain the noble name of Croatia with so much innocent blood.



NO RENEWALS

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CHAPTER I

CATHOLIC GRAND POLICY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES OF MODERN MAN

OF all the great evils to afflict mankind, the will for world dominion has brought in its train the most sanguinary calamities; indeed, it has been the most formidable and the most disastrous. People were dispersed by it, nations were scattered by it, cultures were made to perish by it. It broke and destroyed civilizations. Today, invigorated more than ever by the achievements of science, it is preparing to conquer the Earth in an unprecedented attempt to force the human race into that subjection against which whole generations have soaked our planet in blood.

But if freedom is threatened by such a mighty foe, it is imperilled by other no less powerful enemies, of which one of the most dangerous is undoubtedly the Catholic Church. To speak of Catholic tyranny in a century rocked by gigantic political dictatorships may seem pitiable and naïve. Yet Catholic terror is not a myth. It is a ruthless reality, here in the present.

The supreme aim of the Catholic Church is the Catholicization of the human race. To reach such a goal she will suffer no obstacles, be deterred by no barriers, put up with no enemies, tolerate no rivals, competitors, or even friends. Some of the greatest attacks on individuals and nations were instigated by her: the Crusades of the Middle Ages, the wars against the Turks, the wars against the Protestants, the wars against the French and American revolutions, the war against Liberalism yesterday, the war against Democracy today.

To such an institution, freedom has always been a thing to be destroyed with unearthly passion. Once within her fold, a man may not question, doubt, or object. Her dogmas, and even her decisions, must not be queried.

Although striving to justify herself in the face of science, free inquiry for him is anathematized. All his social, economic, and ideological exertions must be co-ordinated by her. The order established by her must be hailed also by him. His intellectual research is curtailed and often suppressed. Resistance is met with excommunication. Blind obedience at the expense of liberty binds him from birth to death. Intellectual torpor is commended to him as the chief Catholic virtue. The promotion of the miraculous, belief in the improbable, and the acceptance of the impossible, are given precedence over his reason. The most incredible arguments of his faith are relentlessly used to blunt his critical faculties, while his emotions are harnessed by a rage for sensuous worship, imposing services, incantations, pomp, and superstition.

Such despotism the Catholic Church is determined to enforce also upon the whole of Christianity, her two greatest foes being Christian: the Orthodox and the Protestant Churches. Not only because these deprived the "only true Church" of the allegiance of hundreds of millions, but, above all, because by dividing Christendom they became the two greatest obstacles to the conversion of Western man to Catholicism. Hence Catholic long-term strategy being directed at the total extermination of both. That was the motive for the Spanish Armada sailing to invade England, for the wars of religion which were to tear Europe for centuries, and for contemporary Catholic ideological hate crusades throughout the world.

The fact that Catholics no longer burn Protestants has led many to believe that the original Catholic goal no longer holds good. There could be no more dangerous illusion. Catholic hatred is as virulent today as in the past. What has changed is Catholic strategy. Religious toleration, the rise of Protestant nations, the inroads of Communism, have forced the Catholic Church profoundly to revise her anti-Protestant policy. Even tacit alliances with certain sections of Protestantism have been justified on the ground of their necessity to save "Christian civilization." But "Christian civilization" now has come to mean almost anything. To the Catholic Church, however, it spells only Catholic

civilization. Her clarion call to defend "Christian civilization," therefore, is nothing but a Catholic ruse, directed at persuading Protestants to help her to destroy her own foes. The furtherance of Catholicism means expansion of Catholic domination. Catholic domination implies *total elimination of whatever is not Catholic*.

The political need for Catholicism to side with the Protestant U.S.A. was prompted, besides other powerful motives, by its desire to implement this tortuous and yet simple long-range design.

Of all Catholic deceits, that advocating a peaceful co-existence with Protestantism is the most dangerous. Its true goal is to lull Protestantism—indeed, to make of it altogether an ally—the better, once the "atheistic foe of Christianity" that is Communism has been wiped out, to destroy the Christian foes of "Christianity"—namely, all the Christian Churches not within the Catholic fold. The most ancient of these, the Orthodox Church, has been the object of Catholic ire since the fall of the Roman Empire, Catholic attempts to re-incorporate the Orthodox Church having provoked the most formidable religious and political commotions, both in the East and in the West, for over a millennium—e.g. the papal intrigues with the last Byzantine Emperor to mobilize Europe to the defence of Constantinople, provided, in exchange, he acquiesced in the forcible conversion of all Orthodox faithful to the Catholic Church.

After the fall of Constantinople, the original Orthodox capital in the Near East, the Orthodox centre was shifted to its former missionary land, Russia, where the Orthodox Church struck deep roots. And soon, as Rome had been the first Rome and Constantinople the "second Rome," Moscow became the "third Rome."

The growth of the Orthodox seed in Russian soil stultified all Catholic hopes that the fall of Constantinople would provoke ultimate Orthodox disintegration. And this to such an extent that within a few centuries Orthodoxy was again challenging Catholic expansionism as of old. Orthodoxy's vitality was not only religious. It was also partly political, particularly since Peter the Great had made of the Orthodox Church a tool of Czarism (1721), with which she

was identified until 1917. The strength she acquired by such an identification, however, became simultaneously her most fatal weakness, the fall of Czarism entailing also her fall. Which is precisely what happened.

Catholic intrigue against the Orthodox Church has surpassed its efforts against Protestantism. Whereas the Catholic Church may feign tolerance towards Protestantism, against the Orthodox Church it proclaims an all-out war of total extermination. This, in Catholic calculations, can be achieved by the mightiest embodiment of Protestantism; that is, by the U.S.A. smashing Soviet Russia. In the Vatican's grand design, the defeat of Soviet Russia would bring with it the potential Russian mass conversion to Catholicism. That implies the extirpation of the Orthodox Church, and hence the disappearance of one of the two major obstacles to total Christian unity, after which Protestantism in its turn would automatically be treated as Catholic enemy number one, beginning with a relentless Catholic penetration of Protestant U.S.A. The Catholicization of the U.S.A. would at first be carried out by persuasion; ultimately, however, by force. The conversion of Russia and of the U.S.A. would mean one thing: total Catholicization of the West.

An all-powerful Catholicism, in its turn, would spell a tyranny embracing continents. Such a tyranny will claim divine commission, in virtue of the fact that any belief other than the Catholic, being *erroneous*, must be suppressed. The Catholic Church's attempt to impose the "truth"—that is, her laws—would therefore unleash a total persecution which would ultimately herald the greatest reign of terror ever experienced by Western man.

This, it may be said, is mere speculation and cannot be seriously accepted solely on the strength of arguments. One thing only could have the power to persuade: irrefutable evidence of actual contemporary Catholic terror.

The objection is welcomed. For truly Catholic atrocities have already been indelibly written with blood on the pages of the history of the twentieth century. They are here succinctly narrated.

Before proceeding, it might be useful to glance briefly at

the background of the region where they took place, the better to comprehend the nature and objectives of Catholic totalitarianism in action. What follows should therefore be carefully examined. The fact that Catholicism let loose all its terror within a comparatively small area should not induce us to minimize its portentous significance, as the terror which it enforced within limited confines is the same terror which the Catholic Church, should she be permitted to acquire total power, would unhesitatingly enforce upon provinces comprising the whole West, if not the whole world. From now on, therefore, our attention will be focused upon a small portion of Central South-Eastern Europe: upon the fair lands of Yugoslavia.

CHAPTER II

PARTIAL CATHOLIC PROMOTION OF WORLD WAR I

PRIOR to the First World War, Central and South-Eastern Europe had become the most dangerous hot-bed of rival Imperialisms: those of Orthodox Czarist Russia, of Catholic Austria-Hungary, of Islamic Turkey, and, since she began her Berlin-Baghdad dream, that of the Protestant Germany of the Kaiser. But if these four hostile giants were jockeying for a dominating position in those regions, a fifth Power was hovering in seeming sinister isolation, but in reality bent upon a vigorous prosecution of her own Imperialistic designs: the Catholic Church. For truly, if the Balkan peninsula had become the cross-roads of German, Austrian, Russian, and Turkish Imperialisms, it was equally the hotly contested meeting-ground of several religions. Three of these leant very heavily upon lay partners: upon the Sublime Porte in the case of Islam, upon Czarist Russia in the case of Orthodoxy, upon Austria-Hungary in the case of Catholicism.

Within the Czarist dominion Orthodoxy's immunity from Catholicism was guaranteed by the political might of the Russian colossus. This, however, was non-existent in the Balkans. There the almighty power was not Orthodox Russia, but Austria-Hungary, ruled by the Hapsburgs, distinguished for their attachment to Catholicism, with which, more than an alliance, they had evolved a partnership directed at the mutual promotion of Catholic-Austrian political and religious expansion. The key to such a policy: while the Austro-Hungarian Empire used Catholicism to "Austrianize" the Slavs, the Vatican used Austria-Hungary to Catholicize the Orthodox, via:

- (a) the preservation of Catholicism where it existed,
- (b) the methodical Catholicization of the Balkanic nationalities, and
- (c) the extinction of the Orthodox Church.

Within the Hapsburg provinces this triple policy was carried out with comparative smoothness. Where, however, Austrian jurisdiction ended, there Catholic power was proportionately weak, with the result that its policy of Catholicization suffered in consequence. If Catholic plans were thwarted by the lack of Hapsburg protection, they were no less obstructed by the vigour of certain Balkan peoples priding themselves on their race, history, and religion. Prominent among these: the Serbs.

Serbia, one of the proudest champions of the Slav race, was simultaneously the staunchest citadel of the Orthodox faith. To the Vatican—and therefore to Austria-Hungary—such an independent religio-political unit came increasingly to represent a most serious obstacle to all their expansionistic designs—and, hence, to be removed. With the result that from her very inception Serbia found herself the special target of Catholic-Austrian malevolence, which frequently took the form of nasty racial and religious persecution, epitomized by unwholesome outbursts of anti-Serbian, anti-Orthodox hate.

Papal anti-Serbian odium has been virulent throughout the centuries. Pope Lucius III called the Serbs "calumniators of the Holy Church," "plague of the Church," "thieves of the income of the priests," "invaders." Pope Honorius III (1221) called them and all Slavs "foxes, rebels, heretics, perfidious destroyers." Gregory IX (1234) was horrified by the "*perfidia hereticorum Slavoniae*"—the perfidy of the Slav heretics. Boniface VIII (1298) called them "evil offspring." To Pope John XXII (1319), Bosnia was a "land of heretics and polluted spots of infidelity." To Pope Clement VI (1351) the Serbs were "*iniquitatis filii*"—sons of unreasonableness—and "*fidei Christianae adversi*"—adversaries of the Church. The great Inquisitor, Torquemada, denounced them as "*pestilentes homines*."

As late as the eighteenth century their forced conversion was openly practised—for example, shortly after the mass immigration of the Serbs, who fled before the advancing Turks following the defeat of the Austrian Army, with whom they had fought. Since then Catholic-Austrian hatred of them had at times turned into veritable pogroms—e.g. during

the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908-9, when Orthodox Serbs were hunted down in Zagreb, Sarajevo, throughout Croatia, Slavonia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina.

Catholic antagonism was not merely local: it transcended a purely regional Catholic-Orthodox rivalry, and often it assumed an international significance, owing chiefly to the ambitions of Catholic expansionism, which at times did not hesitate to use even military pressure, with the object of hitting at the Orthodox Church by hitting at the Serbs. Being master in oblique diplomacy, the Vatican seldom encouraged open religious anti-Orthodox campaigns, but kept its iron fist hovering over Serbia. Its strategy concerning the latter: her total extermination, as one of the main foci of Balkan Orthodoxy.

The extermination of Serbia as a centre of Orthodoxy was undertaken in a field where the Vatican knew it was at its best—namely, in the dim world of hidden European diplomacy—and where, so it calculated, it could successfully carry out its policy through the services of its obligingly powerful secular ally: the Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire. To the latter Serbia had become as great an obstacle as it had to Catholicism, mainly because Serbia, as the inspirational centre of a large section of the Slavs, had begun to play an increasingly important role in fostering resistance to Austro-Hungarian Imperialism. The removal of Serbia was no less paramount for Catholic expansionism, to which a Serbian collapse would have meant not so much the collapse of a Slavonic centre as that of Orthodox resistance to Catholic penetration.

Such a policy, however, had to be carefully conducted, as local issues, thanks mainly to the explosiveness of the complications of Russian, German, Turkish, and Austrian Imperialisms, were likely to trespass into the international field. A policy meant to hamstring Pan-Slavism in regions linked by racial and religious ties with Serbia was none the less adopted. In this Catholic Croatia was designated for the role of a Catholic bridge, to enable Catholic-Austrian Imperialism to descend into the Slav-Orthodox world. "Croatia," said Dr. Frank, a Catholic Croat politician, as early

as 1904, "must be the bridge which will permit Austria to descend upon the Balkans."¹ The aim was not merely steady extension. There was envisaged the incorporation of Balkan territory—e.g. that of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as already mentioned, by Austria-Hungary in 1908-9. On this occasion the Vatican played a major part as one of the secret advisers to the Emperor Francis Joseph.

A few years later Austro-Hungarian Imperialism assumed an importance far transcending local Balkan problems, influencing as it did the crisis of 1914, which culminated in the tragedy of Sarajevo. Sarajevo, it must be remembered, started the First World War. During the Bosnian annexation (1908-9), German, Austrian, and Catholic Imperialisms had grown alarmed at the status of Serbia as a centre of Pan-Slavism, which, to the Vatican, had become synonymous with the growth of the Orthodox Church. A new, vigorous policy against Serbia was henceforward adopted. What prompted its adoption was tersely expounded by the German Ambassador at Vienna, Tschirscky, some months before the outbreak of the First World War, in a report to Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg: a report portending the shape of things to come. After having examined the reaction of non-Slav political and military circles on the question of Serbia, and their concern at her role as a focus of Pan-Slavism and Orthodoxy, the Ambassador stated simply that a war against her would be very popular:

"These circles view with astonishment and grief the increasing strength of the *Slavic wave*, and all of them are anxiously wondering: What will happen to Austria? . . . A new Veneto has loomed up in the south-east of the Monarchy, an *Irredenta* which can only look beyond the frontiers towards the new big and powerful Serb State. Official circles are no longer at all sure that the Slav regiments can be used against Serbia in case of war. . . . After the Serb victories in the Balkans the *religious differences* among the Yugoslavs no longer seem a *serious obstacle to their national unity*. . . ." ²

William II, the German Emperor, wrote a marginal note on this report: *Mit Blut und Eisen sind die Kerle noch zu kurieren*,—"One can still cure those fellows [the Serbs] with

blood and iron." It was the formula of German Balkan Imperialism, which ran parallel with that of Catholic Austria-Hungary. The latter, like Germany, had decided to crush Orthodox Serbia before the First World War started.³ The Austrian Prime Minister, Count Sturgkh, at a Crown Council dealing with it, proved that beyond the shadow of a doubt:

"A decisive act must be decided upon, a purely diplomatic victory will not suffice for us. . . . If, for international reasons, we must first pass through a diplomatic phase, it should be well understood that it is being done with the firm determination *to end it with war.*"⁴

In a memorial written in Vienna several days *before* the Sarajevo assassination, Austria formally requested assistance from Germany for an attack on Serbia, while the famous memorial sent to the Emperor William after the death of Francis Joseph's heir, to assure Austria of the support of her ally, had been prepared after the Kaiser's visit to Francis Ferdinand at the castle of Konopisht in the middle of May, 1914. After the Sarajevo assassination, the following postscript was added to the document:

"This memorial had already been completed when the terrible events of Sarajevo supervened. One can scarcely realize the full import of this abominable assassination, which has nevertheless . . . produced the irrefutable proof of . . . the danger and intensity of the Pan-Serbian propaganda that recoils at nothing. . . . Under these conditions the necessity of breaking with an energetic hand the net in which her adversary wishes to suffocate her (Austria-Hungary) is imposed on the Monarchy."

That Catholic Austria was determined to crush Serbia was further proved by the Austrian Chief of Staff, Conrad, who, three days after having resolved on war with the Emperor Francis Joseph, had another decisive conversation with Berchtold. Here are their relevant words:

Berchtold: "What will happen if Serbia lets matters slide until the mobilization and then yields completely?"

Conrad: "Then we invade Serbian territory."

Berchtold: "And if Serbia does nothing?"

Conrad: "Then Serbia will remain occupied until all our war expenses have been paid."

Berchtold: "Shall we delay the ultimatum until after the harvest, and after the Sarajevo inquest?"

Conrad: "Better today than tomorrow; we have to exploit the situation. The moment our adversaries suspect anything, they are going to prepare."

Berchtold: "We will take care that the secret will be strictly kept, and that nothing shall be known by anyone."

Conrad: "About what date should the ultimatum be sent?"

Berchtold: "In a fortnight: July 22. It would be a good idea for you as well as for the Minister of War to go on leave for a while so as to dissipate any kind of anxiety."⁵

The extent of the hatred nursed by the Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire for Orthodox Serbia can be judged by the slogan of one of the Austro-Hungarian top diplomats, Count Forgach: "I wish that in all the offices of the Ministry [Foreign Office] they would inscribe this maxim: *Serbia delenda est* [Serbia must be destroyed]."⁶

What had prompted the writers of the ultimatum to Serbia was precisely their determination to crush her at all costs. Its harshness had been deliberate, to make it unacceptable, in order to provoke war.

The Vatican knew of the intentions of both Germany and Austria-Hungary. As the Kaiser would have hesitated to implement his blood-and-iron policy without Austria, the immediate task of a truly peace-loving Church should have been to use all her influence upon the Austro-Hungarian rulers, so as to restrain them from pursuing such a policy. The most powerful Austro-Hungarian leaders were devout sons of the Church. That old despot, Francis Joseph, who considered himself the instrument of the Lord, was the most Catholic Emperor of Catholic Austria, the Apostolic King of Hungary, the most Catholic of all European kings, and the typical product of a most devout Catholic dynasty, outstanding for its stubborn attachment to the Popes. Yet, when this most Catholic of all Emperors decided to crush Serbia with a war, what did the self-styled Prince of Peace say or do

to prevent his most devout son from immersing Europe in a blood bath?

The Pope did nothing. Or, to be more accurate, he actually encouraged the bloody Austrian Imperialism to go ahead, and permitted Francis Joseph and the Catholic hierarchy of Croatia and Slovenia to start the First World War in the name of God. Fanatical ecclesiastical leaders—e.g. Archbishop Bauer and Bishop Jeglic—preached fiery sermons, aligning everyone under their spiritual jurisdiction on the side of war-mongering Vienna, whose grand scheme by now formed a perfect organic whole with that of the Vatican. Witness the bloodthirsty addresses of Archbishop Bauer to Croat soldiers on June 31 and on August 27, 1914, or that of Bishop Jeglic to Slovene soldiers on August 11, 1914. There can be no doubt that the Vatican had welcomed war.

These are not mere speculations. Historical evidence, although carefully concealed for over thirty years, is now available. In it the Vatican is self-indicted, not only for failing to attempt to prevent the outbreak of the First World War, but for actually encouraging it. Pope Pius X, "the saint," in fact, far from reprimanding the Emperor Francis Joseph, had "often expressed regret that Austria-Hungary had failed to 'chastise' her dangerous Danubian neighbour."⁷ Indeed, the Vatican Secretary of State, speaking in the name of His Holiness after Austria had sent to Serbia her ultimatum threatening war, hoped "that the Monarchy [Catholic Austria-Hungary] would go to the limit."⁷ This most damning evidence was given by none other than the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at the Vatican, Count Palffy, who, as soon as war against Serbia became inevitable, was charged by his Government with the task of informing the Pope and his Secretary of State of the intentions and the "duties" (note the word, duties) of the most Catholic Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in connection with crushing Orthodox Serbia. Count Palffy told Cardinal Merry del Val, Pius X's Secretary of State, about all this on several occasions. The Cardinal's replies were put on record in the diplomatic correspondence of the Austro-Hungarian Embassy.⁷ In these letters the Vatican's Secretary of State spoke in the name of the Pope. The following passage from a secret dispatch

of Count Palffy to Count Berchtold, dated July 29, 1914, besides revealing the Vatican's official policy, is an irrefutable indictment of the Vatican as an inspirer of those imperialisms which eventually were to lead mankind to the First World War :

"During the conversation I had two days ago with the Cardinal Secretary of State, he [the Cardinal] spoke spontaneously of the great problems and questions now agitating Europe. It would be impossible to detect in His Eminence's words *any spirit whatever of indulgence and conciliation*. It is true he characterized the note to Serbia as very harsh, but he nevertheless approved it without any reservation and, at the same time, expressed in an indirect way *the hope that the Monarchy would go to the limit*. Certainly, added the Cardinal, it was too bad that Serbia had not been humiliated very much sooner, for then it might have been done without putting into play, as today, such immense possibilities. This declaration also corresponds to the Pope's way of thinking, for in the course of recent years His Holiness has often expressed regret that Austria-Hungary has *failed to 'chastise' her dangerous Danubian neighbour*."

The implacable determination of the Vatican for war could not fail to strike with astonishment even the Austrian representative. "One might wonder," went on Palffy, "for what motive the Catholic Church shows herself so warlike at an epoch when she is governed by a chief who is truly a saint, imbued with veritably apostolic ideas. The answer is very simple. The Pope and the Curia see in Serbia the ravaging malady that little by little has penetrated the Monarchy [the Catholic Austro-Hungarian Monarchy] to the marrow, and which, in time, would end by disintegrating it." ⁸

The motives which had prompted the Vatican to encourage war, consequently, were of a purely religious character, the Vatican seeing in the Austro-Hungarian and German Imperialisms the secular instrument by means of which Providence was going to crush the Orthodox Church. This was further confirmed by the secret dispatch, quoted above, of the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires, who, relating the reply of the Vatican's Secretary of State, continued as follows :

"Despite all the other experiments attempted by the Curia, in the course of the last decade, Austria-Hungary is and remains *the Catholic State par excellence*, the strongest rampart of the Faith, which stands in our day for the Church of Christ. The fall of this rampart would signify for the Church the loss of its most solid prop; *in the conflicts with the Orthodox Church* she would see her most powerful champion struck down.

"Hence, just as for Austria-Hungary there is an immediate necessity of self-preservation to expel from its organism, even by force if need be, the dissolving malady, there is also for the Catholic Church an indirect necessity of *doing or approving everything that would serve to attain that end.*"

Count Palffy's conclusion is ominous: "In this light," he ends, "a harmony between the apostolic sentiment and the war spirit can easily be confirmed."⁸

War against Serbia had thus come to represent, in the eyes both of the Vatican and of the devout Catholic Austro-Hungarian Imperialists, a war against Pan-Slavism and the Orthodox Church respectively. "At last!" shouted Count Albert Apponyi, Hungarian Minister, in a plenary session of the Hungarian Parliament, on the official outbreak of hostilities. "At last!" repeated Catholic hierarchs throughout the Balkans.

"Upon our bodies there are great quantities of vermin represented by the Serbs and by the Slav-Serbs," wrote *Hrvatska* (Dr. Frank's), in its issue of June 29, 1914. And the same paper on July 3, 1914, declared: "We must settle our affairs with them once and for all, so as to annihilate them. From now onwards this must be our objective for the future. Our people announce to the Serbs a fight of life and death." Simultaneously, Ante Bauer, the Archbishop of Zagreb, was organizing great processions, inciting the Catholic masses to pray to Our Lady for a crushing victory for Catholic Austria against the Orthodox Serbs. "Croat soldiers!" shouted the Archbishop, during a military parade at Cernomerac, on July 31, 1914, three days after the outbreak of the First World War, "our beloved King summons us to war. Our country is threatened with destruction by the enemy [the Orthodox Serbs]. God Himself summons you to war. Be the instruments of

His vengeance!" The era of the great world upheavals, of the great world revolutions, of the great world catastrophes which from then onward were to shake with increasing violence the nations and continents of the planet, had begun.

CHAPTER III

VATICAN MACHINATIONS IN CENTRAL EASTERN EUROPE. A CATHOLIC BALKANIC EMPIRE

FROM its original centre the conflict spread to the rest of Europe, where the ruthless might of Germany and Austria seemed about to sweep everything before it, beginning with the Serbian David who had the audacity to defy the two Goliaths of the West. The Vatican appealed for peace, and then counselled the faithful to slaughter one another, as befitted the loyal subjects of rulers ordained by God. Following such lofty guidance, Catholics in Germany and Austria petitioned the Almighty for a smashing German-Austro-Hungarian victory, while their Catholic counterparts in Italy, France, and England boldly insisted that He should favour them with a prompt Allied triumph.

While the various Catholic Hierarchies on both sides sprinkled cannons with holy water, blessed marching armies, buried millions of dead, each inciting their respective soldiers to murder their opponents "to save Christian civilization," the Vatican, having camouflaged itself with ambiguous declarations of neutrality, confidently awaited the victory of its greatest bulwark in Central Europe, the most Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire. Papal confidence rested on something more solid than divine providence: it rested on the numerical superiority of the German-Austrian divisions, which nothing seemed able to resist. France was invaded; the Kaiser headed for Paris. His march *nach Paris* was the just punishment inflicted upon "the eldest daughter of the Church" for having turned "atheist." At least, that is what the Pope came firmly to believe.

On August 20, 1914, before Austria declared war on Great Britain, Pius X, "the saint," died. Immediately preparations for the conclave disclosed the astonishing truth: the Vatican's neutrality had been nothing but a fake. The Cardinals, convened at Rome for the election, proved to be

the best witnesses of this; a great proportion of them were enthusiastic supporters of Imperial Germany and Austria-Hungary. Most of them not only openly said so, but also sided entirely with their colleagues from the Germanic and Austro-Hungarian Empires, who, convinced that God was on their side, initiated a high-pressure campaign among the lukewarm or hostile minority to persuade them that it was their duty to choose a new Pope who, like the Almighty, spoke German. One German Cardinal had become so sure that God was pro-German that whenever approaching a colleague he greeted him with the ominous prediction: *Cito vincemus in bello*—"We shall win the war quickly." The Italians even more quickly nicknamed him Cardinal Cito.¹

The German-Austrian attempts to influence the choice of a new Pope were not unusual. Their efforts were mild compared to those of the preceding conclave, when the choice of the new Pope, in spite of the Cardinals chanting the *Veni Creator*, had been decided in a most untheological manner, not by the Holy Ghost—which, Catholics still believe, chooses all Their Holinesses—but by the Austrian Emperor, Francis Joseph himself.

The Emperors had openly interfered in the elections of the Popes for centuries. Thus, by virtue of the fact that they had acquired the right of veto, they could at will "suggest" to the Cardinals assembled in conclave or ban any candidate for the Papacy. The Austrian Emperor, for instance, had tried to prevent Pius IX (died 1878) from becoming Pope. The imperial failure was due, not to divine intervention, but to the more prosaic fact that the Cardinal deputed to use the veto arrived too late for the conclave.

After the death of Leo XIII, while the Cardinals were praying for divine guidance, the "guidance" came straight from Vienna, in the person of Cardinal Puzyna, whom the Emperor Francis Joseph had charged with telling his colleagues that Cardinal Rampolla "must on no account become Pope." At that conclave there were two schools of thought about the election: the first, which wanted a candidate who would return to the reactionary policy of Leo's

predecessor; and the second, which wanted a man with liberal views. It happened that the Austrian Emperor favoured the first. The Cardinals voting for Rampolla did not know that Puzyna had the veto in his pocket. When Rampolla was about to get the necessary two-thirds majority vote, Puzyna read the veto. The Austrian Emperor was duly obeyed. Rampolla never became Pope, and the reactionary Patriarch of Venice became Pius X.

Pius X's successor, Benedict XV, was elected after fifteen laborious ballots. One of his first acts was to abolish for good Austria's right to veto. But Benedict XV, although liberal-minded, once in the strait-jacket of Vatican diplomacy had to conform to the Vatican's pro-Austria-Hungary strategy, with the result that London and Paris promptly branded him a "Germanophile."

When the policy of blood and iron began to recoil on its promoters, and their huge military machine started to break, the Vatican, having grown alarmed, began ominous diplomatic activities, with a view to preventing the fall of the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires. Another grand strategic plan, crystallized in the formula *Peace without Victory*, was soon set in motion, and became the pivot of Vatican activities throughout 1917 and until the end of the war. The Pope's White Peace was quickly adopted also by Berlin and Vienna. Peace overtures reached the Allies in December, 1916, from the Central Powers and, indeed, from Washington,² after the death of Francis Joseph.

The new Emperor, Charles, looked on the Vatican as the last hope for the Empire. In July, 1917, he sent a desperate "letter of filial obedience" to Benedict XV, in which he left "to his august authority" the decision of what great sacrifices the Austro-Hungarian Empire could make in order to get a quick peace with the Allies.

The Pope pursued his *Peace without Victory* campaign with renewed vigour, and on August 3, 1917, implemented it with an official move, addressed "to the leaders of the belligerent nations." This, in actual fact, was the Vatican's official attempt to save the authoritarian German and Austro-Hungarian Empires from defeat. But the move, although eminently political, in reality had been motivated by long-

range religious schemes. The promotion of the latter depended on the success of the former, and both rested upon the maintenance of the pre-war political map of Europe. The Papal scheme, besides aiming at the preservation of Imperial Germany and Imperial Austria-Hungary, was directed at the promotion of Catholic religious penetration of the Balkans, as proved by the following proposals of the Pope:

- (a) Regulation of all Balkan questions.
- (b) Regulation of the Armenian question.
- (c) Resurrection of Catholic Poland.
- (d) Elimination of all Russian influence from the Balkans.

With the regulation of Armenia, the Vatican envisaged the creation of a Catholic centre to the south-east of the Orthodox world; with the restoration of Catholic Poland, a strong Catholic State in the north of Central Europe. Between these two there would have stood the super-Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire, led by a super-Catholic ruler, the Emperor Charles, who was so pious that only thirty-one years after his death (1922-1953) the Vatican took the first step towards declaring him a saint.

The *Peace without Victory* formula, however, envisaged even more: nothing less than the strengthening of the Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire. According to this further proposal, the Pope hoped that "the regulation of the territorial question between Austria and Italy (the latter on the side of the Allies), with due regard to the desires of the populations, would be compensated by the *devolution* to the Austrian Monarchy of the Polish crown."³ The implementation of this last Vatican move would have spelt such a formidable Catholic influence throughout Central Europe as almost automatically to blot out that of the Orthodox Church.

The Vatican's note to the belligerents was supplemented by secret Catholic intrigues with Austria and Germany, Vatican diplomacy going so far as to formulate tentative agreements with the new German Chancellor, through a young diplomat, E. Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII. The

Allies, however, who never received any Vatican proposal for *Peace without Victory* when on the point of collapsing under the early German-Austro-Hungarian blows—now having been made cognisant of it—rejected the Papal plan. Their most authoritative reply came from the U.S.A. On August 27, 1917, President Wilson told the Pope that the pontifical programme meant nothing less than the restoration of the *pre-war status*. A return to the pre-war status, added the President, would make a durable peace impossible; the Central Powers, unless defeated, would unloose new wars.

The Central Powers, seeing their last chance of survival vanish, decided upon an all-out military blow at the Allies. And, following the Allied refusal, embarked upon a desperate effort to break them in the field. The Austro-Hungarian armies launched the most terrific hurricane of artillery fire ever experienced in an attempt to smash the Italian front. The hurricane lasted three whole months. The bid was not conducted with gun-fire alone. It was supplemented by another formidable weapon: propaganda, the objective of which was the disruption of the troops' morale. The propaganda weapon was used simultaneously by the Socialists and the Vatican, both of which flooded Italy with a pacifist wave on humanitarian and political grounds. What had motivated the Vatican to take part in it had been its hope that it might give a new lease of life, even if obliquely, to its grand plan of *Peace without Victory*. Benedict XV spoke of "a useless massacre": a statement which was meant to be interpreted—as, in fact, it was—by the fighting men as a request to lay down their arms.

The triple military-Socialist-Vatican campaign resulted in the disaster of Caporetto. The Austro-Hungarian armies smashed the Allied front and set out to descend on North Italy. The Austrian attempt almost succeeded. It had, however, exhausted Austria-Hungary, and after it the end came quickly. By the time the war was over, four great Empires—the German, the Austro-Hungarian, the Turkish, and the Russian—had tumbled into the dust. The face of the West, of the Near East, and hence of the Balkans, had been drastically changed.

In the post-war world the Vatican was confronted with several new portents: the disappearance of her most powerful Austrian religio-political tool in the Balkans, the rise of Bolshevik Russia, and the emergence of independent new nations—among these, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. The disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire soon proved to be a worse disaster than had at first been envisaged. For the Bolsheviks had not only seized Russia, but were advancing with growing boldness in the regions of what only a short while before had been the well-disciplined provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Indeed, Hungary had for a short period felt the Bolshevik claw upon her back.

The Vatican's response was simplicity itself: all-out war against Bolshevism. Thanks to this, it soon found itself surrounded by powerful Allies, the victors who had defeated Austria-Hungary—i.e. England, France, and the U.S.A. These three countries sent expeditionary forces to invade Communist Russia from the West, the South, and the Far East. The Vatican sided with them, and mobilized its diplomacy, its faithful, its clergy; indeed, it encouraged whole nations to attack the Bolshevik monster. The most fanatical of them all was newly resurrected Catholic Poland.

Poland hated Russia (*a*) on historical grounds, (*b*) on racial grounds, (*c*) on religious grounds, and (*d*) since the Communist Revolution, on ideological grounds. Owing to these and other factors, the Vatican decided to promote Catholic Poland to the role previously played by Catholic Austria. A top prelate, Achille Ratti, later Pope Pius XI, was despatched to Warsaw. His mission: to steer Poland along the path willed by the Vatican and its allies—i.e. Catholic dictatorship in the domestic field, Polish expansionism in the external, their objectives being the destruction of Communism and democracy at home and of Bolshevik Russia abroad.

Ratti's task was crowned with speedy success. In the spring of 1919 (February), after a hundred years of dependence, resurrected Poland surged officially out of the ruins of her former subjugators. By the spring of 1920, only one year later, Catholic Poland had already embarked upon a wholly unprovoked war against atheistic Bolshevik Russia.

Poland's leader: a fanatical hater of democracy, of Russia, and of Communism—Marshal Joseph Pilsudski.

Pilsudski became obsessed by a triple grand dream: the setting up of a Polish-Catholic military dictatorship; Polish expansion from Danzig to Odessa; the destruction of Soviet Russia. From the very beginning he set out to implement his policy. Ratti mobilized behind him the Catholic Church in Poland and Vatican diplomacy in the international sphere, with the result that, when Pilsudski attacked Russia, the Allies and the Vatican were all behind him. The moment was well chosen. The Bolsheviks were already fighting for their lives on three fronts: against the White armies of Kolchak, Denikin, and Wrangel. Pilsudski, advised by the military men (General Henrys, for one) of France, the then strongest military Power to emerge from the First World War, planned to exploit the Bolshevik preoccupation with Wrangel and to seize the Russian Ukraine west of the Dnieper, to occupy White Russia, and to extend the frontiers of Poland until they stretched from Danzig to Odessa. With Wrangel pressing in the Crimea, the whole Bolshevik system would collapse, and Poland, "a country fit for gentlemen and Catholic bishops to rule," would become the only strong Power in a mutilated and subjugated Russia.

Following the First World War, a coalition of Allies—including France, the most redoubtable military Power of the West—sent their generals, one of whom was the pious, Jesuit-trained Weygand, twenty years later a mainstay of France's Pétain in Nazified Europe, to help Pilsudski destroy Russia. Pilsudski had become the main pillar of Vatican grand strategy directed at Catholicizing the Balkans by ousting and destroying the Orthodox Church. The military dream of this obtuse general threw Poland into chaos. The Russians hit back and came within twelve miles of Warsaw. All diplomats fled the capital, with the exception of Ratti, the Papal Nuncio. Then the Poles, with the help of Weygand, defeated the Russian armies by a brilliant counterstroke and by luck. The Catholic Church, which had secretly instigated the Polish war on Russia, declared that God had saved Poland from the Reds by granting her a miraculous victory. Thereupon, Te Deums were sung in all Catholic churches,

and the "Miracle of the Vistula" was labelled the eighteenth decisive battle of the world.

After the war, however, Catholic Poland was no bigger and no smaller than she had been before Piłsudski embarked on his insane adventure. The Vatican's gamble of attempting to conquer the whole of the Balkans with the Polish sword in order, once Polish dominion had been extended from Danzig to Odessa, to impose Catholicism had been a complete fiasco.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST GREAT HYBRID OF CATHOLIC INTOLERANCE. POLAND AND CATHOLIC FASCIST TYRANNY

EXPERIENCE has taught the Vatican that if it is wise to pursue one main strategy, it is even wiser to promote subsidiary ones, so that, should its main scheme meet with failure, it can thus promptly initiate the vigorous promotion of another, without causing any serious break in the continuity of its general grand plans. Following this principle, the Vatican, while encouraging a policy of naked aggression against Communist Russia and of conquest of the Balkans by using the Catholic sword of Pilsudski, at the same time began the promotion of another parallel grand design, the double goal of which was nothing less than the conquest of both Soviet Russia and the Balkans by diplomatic, religious, and political penetration. As long as the Allied and the Polish armies seemed to be victorious, the new policy was kept prudently in the background. Once, however, it became apparent that the Allied armies could not overthrow Soviet Russia, at least for some years, and that Pilsudski's Danzig-Odessa Polish Catholic Empire would never become a reality, the Vatican began to set it in motion.

In the same year that Pilsudski attacked Russia, but after his grandiose plans had failed as far as the Vatican was concerned, Pope Benedict XV decided to give the final death-blow to the Orthodox Church throughout the Balkans by converting nothing less than the centre of Orthodoxy, Russia herself, to Catholicism. In 1920 his confidential agent, Baron Monti, contacted the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Sforza, with a view to having him facilitate the entry into Russia of Catholic priests. At the very time when all Europe kept repeating "This Lenin cannot last," the Pope had, in fact, approached Count Sforza, to whom, under the

seal of secrecy, he unfolded his new grand strategy. In the words of Sforza himself:

"Seeing my surprise (at the Pope's request to the Italian Government to facilitate the entry of Catholic priests into Soviet Russia) Monti explained—and it was evident that he was repeating the very words of the Pope—'His Holiness thinks that even these crimes and this blood will one day be of service if it is going to be possible, when the wave of irreligion has passed, to attempt a Catholic evangelization in Russia. Orthodoxy no longer has any deep-rooted life; its end as the official religion offers possibilities which would never have existed so long as a Czar, Protector of the Church, continued to reign.'"¹

Following this step, young clerics soon afterwards began to study Russian and the history of the Orthodox Church. Russian converts to Catholicism were organized. One of these, Alexander Evreinov, a Russian diplomat, was ordained a Catholic priest, and made a rapid career as a specialist in Orthodox matters whose advice had considerable weight at the Curia.

In that same year, 1920, Mgr. Ropp, Bishop of Vilna, had many conferences with White Russians and German and Baltic Catholics in connection with the forthcoming Catholicization of Russia. Following this, the Vatican began to negotiate directly with the Russian Bolsheviks themselves, negotiations which reached a climax in 1922, when the Conference of Genoa offered the incredible spectacle of the Bolshevik Foreign Minister, Chicherin, and the Archbishop of Genoa, acting as the Pope's representative, toasting one another in public. At that period the Vatican talked triumphantly of the "concessions" it had obtained to supplant the Orthodox Church with Catholicism throughout Russia, "to convert a country of 90 million people to the true religion," as the *Osservatore Romano* put it. "The moment has arrived propitious for *rapprochement* (between the Vatican and Moscow)," continued the paper, "inasmuch as the iron circle of Caesaro-papism (i.e. the Czar was head of the Church) which hermetically closed Russian religious life to all Roman influence, has been broken."

The Vatican had no illusions about the attitude of the

Soviets towards religion in general and the Orthodox Church and Catholicism in particular. Yet it dealt with them as a preparatory move preceding the actual grand-scale conversion of Russia *after the Bolsheviks collapsed*. "Actual political conditions [inside Russia] form a grave obstacle; but this obstacle," declared again the papal organ, "has a temporary character." The key to Vatican designs to destroy the Orthodox Church by the Catholicization of Russia, then as now, was just that.

Simultaneously with this new policy towards the centre of Orthodoxy, the Vatican began a parallel one in the Balkans. There the main goal was the one pursued in Russia: destruction of the Orthodox Church by the Catholicization of regions held by Orthodoxy. Between Danzig and Odessa, however, there had appeared many nations. This compelled the Vatican, after the failure of Pilsudski's plan for a Catholic Balkan Empire, to pursue various policies in consonance with the local political habitat of each nation, although never losing sight of its long-range ultimate goal.

The essence of this new Balkan policy was simplicity itself: total extermination of the Orthodox Church wherever Catholics were in the majority; Catholic penetration and the undermining of the Government of non-Catholic countries where Catholics were in a minority. This broad policy was promoted from north to south, with varying degrees of success. The most striking results were obtained within the span of two decades: the first in Poland, predominantly Catholic; the second in Yugoslavia, predominantly Orthodox. These two countries offered the most typical instances of Catholic ruthlessness when in the majority, and of Catholic unscrupulousness when in the minority.

Poland proper, almost entirely Catholic, characterized her policy with, in addition to her own brand of ugly external aggressiveness, the utmost intolerance towards the two basic tenets of democracy: political and religious freedom. As in the political sphere she became one of the first Fascist dictatorships of Europe, so in the religious she began an instantaneous policy of religious intolerance. The two, besides being interlinked, were reciprocally useful (a) to the

Polish nationalists, in their ruthless Polonization of all non-Polish elements, (b) to the Catholic Church, in her ruthless Catholicization of the Orthodox. Catholicism's and Polish Fascism's objective: a totally Polish-Catholic Poland.

In this State two things became paramount: a political dictatorship under Pilsudski, a religious one under Catholicism. Democracy was blotted out; the Orthodox Church was almost exterminated; concentration camps were established; democrats hunted down. While Pilsudski and his band of colonels and landowners butchered Polish democrats, Catholicism persecuted the Orthodox Church. Orthodox priests were banished, sent to prison, expelled, or even executed; Orthodox churches were demolished or transformed into Catholic churches; Orthodox people were boycotted, forced to embrace Catholicism, or massacred when refusing to do so.² This parallel Polish-Catholic campaign was implemented thanks to sundry factors of a domestic and international character. The rights of the racial, political, and religious minorities within Poland were ruthlessly trampled down with a zest which within a few brief years blackened beyond recognition the names of both Poland and the Church, true democracy having been first undermined, then paralysed, and finally openly destroyed by the big landowners, the military, and the Hierarchy. This was done in spite of the Allies having compelled Poland solemnly to pledge herself before Europe to respect the rights of such minorities. Whereas the Polish democrats tried hard to fulfil the pledge, their opponents, the supporters of the ghastly Polish Catholic-military dictatorship, did their best to violate it.

The double campaign to make Poles of those who were not Poles and to Catholicize those who were not Catholics affected a large population and area of the new Poland, as proved by the fact that about 35 per cent of Poland was composed of Ukrainian territory, the large majority of the population of which was Orthodox. The excuses for such a policy were many. The standard one was simplicity itself. Once the Polish Nationalists had decided to "Polandize" a region, they merely accused the Ukrainians of being "rebels." The stigma of rebellion was a convenient alibi for both

Government and Church. For the accusation of rebellion carried with it the right of the Government to use the harshest measures to "Polandize" and, at the same time, Catholicize the Ukrainians.

The fruits of this double policy against the "rebels" were gathered a few years later, when all Catholic Ukrainians were counted as Poles, whereas those who had refused to become Catholics were still counted as Ukrainians, and hence continued to be persecuted. Fascist Poland "proved" to the League of Nations that the Ukrainian minority was not a big one by this simple method of counting all Catholic Ukrainians as Poles, thus reducing the Ukrainian population by one million.³

From the very beginning the Ukrainians began to be deprived of their minority rights one by one. Most of their schools were closed: before the Polish occupation there had existed 2,612, which by 1924 had been reduced to only 800. Ukrainian national habits were suppressed, their institutions persecuted or abolished, their language proscribed. Parallel with this, the fervently Catholic Poles attempted to convert them to the "true faith."

The "true religion" of Poland was Catholicism—an Article of the Polish Constitution made that clear: "The Catholic Church occupies the paramount place amid all other religions" (Art. 114.1). Moreover, Catholicism, unlike any other religion, had been proclaimed a power in its own right within the State by the Constitution of 1921, which declared that "the Catholic Church is ruled by her own laws" (Art. 114.2). The Catholic religion was made compulsory in all schools, and children of Protestant and Orthodox parents were compelled to absorb Catholic teaching. Schoolmasters had to take all pupils to Mass and to church. All teachers had to be Catholics, and could teach only with the consent of the Church. All Polish schools were in the iron grip of the Hierarchy, which, when the concordat between Poland and the Vatican was signed in 1925, and after the Pope had written his Bull *Vixitum Poloniae Unitas* (1925), became the ruling power of the country, the real soul of the Polish dictatorship.

Catholicism, believing itself all-powerful, acted as it

always acts when not forced to be cautious for fear of reprisals, and showed all the ruthlessness and disregard of religious liberty of which it was capable. Thus, while the Poles were "Polandizing" the Ukrainians, the Church was simultaneously Catholicizing them at the point of the Polish sword. Persecution, tortures, and even death were liberally threatened against anyone who refused to be converted to the "only true religion of God." Assassination and massacre became the hall-mark of the Catholicization of the Orthodox in Ukraine and other regions—e.g. in 1923, seven Orthodox were shot near Loubatchiv, simply because they had the impertinence to hold to their own religion. In Stanislawiv, a few years earlier, all wounded and sick were massacred in the hospitals by Catholic Poles when the latter heard that the patients were Orthodox. At Leopold on March 18, 1923, the Ukrainian Orthodox population of that town, having met before the Cathedral of St. George, the religious centre of Eastern Galicia, were charged by Polish cavalry, which killed men, women, and children indiscriminately. The massacre became known as the massacre of Leopold. The part played in it by the Polish Hierarchy can best be judged by the fact that on the same day they ordered all the bells of Warsaw to ring, and a solemn *Te Deum* to be sung as a thanksgiving.

The Catholicization of the Orthodox was systematic. It was carried out not only by mass conversion, but also by the more subtle means of depriving the faithful of their clergy. This policy was carried out with villainous efficiency, and within a comparatively short time hundreds of Orthodox priests were arrested, deported, or imprisoned. At Leopold, for instance, among the 2,000 Orthodox prisoners in its jails, there were no fewer than 500 Orthodox priests, besides forty-five Orthodox monks of the Order of St. Basil, from the monasteries of Zowkwa and Krechiw. At Sokal, an aged priest of seventy, Demtchouk, was shot; at Radchiv, another priest, named Pellekh, was killed simply because he was a priest of the Orthodox Church.⁴

While Orthodox clergy became the special objects of Catholic odium, the simple Orthodox faithful were persecuted with no less ruthlessness. Thousands of Orthodox

Ukrainians were executed. "Whole villages were depopulated by massacre."⁵ "Most of the Greek Churches were plundered by Polish soldiers, and used as stables for their horses, and even as latrines."⁶ The Catholic Church approved, indeed encouraged, all the horror of such campaigns, Catholic priests were attached to such expeditions, not only in order "to look after the spiritual welfare of the Polish uniformed missionaries," but also in order to see that the forced conversions and extermination of the Orthodox should not be overlooked.

The Polish Bishops were the promoters of the ethnical and religious anti-Ukrainian policy, while Polish Catholic organizations and churches raised funds to carry it out. Behind them there stood the Vatican itself, which, to make sure that the campaign was conducted with due efficiency, sent regular ecclesiastical inspectors to Poland, while members of the Polish Hierarchy frequently reported personally to the Pope on the progress made in the campaign of Catholicization.

In the most decisive period of the campaign the Papal Nuncio in Warsaw was the very soul of this Catholicization through terror. Achille Ratti not only advised the Polish Hierarchy, but actually directed them, specializing in the type of counsel which proved so useful when the League of Nations or other international bodies denounced such persecutions to the world.

Achille Ratti, who had gone to Warsaw in 1919, was elected Pope Pius XI in 1922. In that same year he decided to support the young Fascist regime in Italy and to disband the Italian Catholic Party, to make it easier for Mussolini to build a totalitarian regime.

Within a few years Poland had become a State according to the will of the Vatican—a State where political or religious dissidence became a crime; where a Fascist and a Catholic dictatorship, the first in Europe, ruled supreme. Poland, in fact, had become the ideal State, which the Vatican intended to transplant throughout the whole of the Balkans had its strategy succeeded.

Polish Fascism and Polish Catholicism, within two brief decades, were to reap the fruits of their hatred and fanaticism.

In 1939, Polish-Catholic tyranny crumbled before the legions of Hitler and Stalin. The Second World War in no time quickly encircled the whole world. Fascist-Catholic Poland, devastated and defeated, was once more occupied and partitioned. The persecutors had become the persecuted. Verily the arrogant had fallen and had been humbled.

CHAPTER V

YUGOSLAVIA AND THE VATICAN

WHEN in 1917, during the First World War, the Papal Nuncio in Munich, E. Pacelli, secretly negotiated with the Central Powers to accomplish the Pope's *Peace without Victory*, in order to save both Germany and Austria-Hungary from defeat, he had already made his first attempt to strangle a nation as yet unborn; Yugoslavia.

If the Vatican's attempt was directed at preserving its most useful Hapsburg lay partner, it simultaneously had another no less important goal: to prevent a motley of nationalities from springing out of the Empire's ruins as sovereign States in their own right. In such States, Poland excepted, Catholicism would have sunk to the level of a minority. Worse, it would have been dominated by heretical churches and their political Allies: i.e. by the Protestant and Liberal in Czechoslovakia, by the Orthodox in Yugoslavia. With its last attempt to save the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Vatican therefore struck a final blow against the yet unborn "Hussite" Czechs and the Catholic Slovaks on one side, and the Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats and Slovenes on the other, the fulfilment of their dreams lying as it did in the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian colossus.

The Emperor Charles was advised to transform the Empire into a Federation. The idea, which originated at the Vatican, was repellent to both, as it meant, besides the loosening of Imperial control, the loosening of Catholic control over the various races of the tottering Empire. But in the circumstances the alternative was total collapse. In October Charles announced the transformation of the Hapsburg Monarchy into a Federal State. The offer—which, significantly, was made only at the last moment—although accompanied by secret papal moves, left the Allies determined to end for good the rule of the double-headed Austrian eagle.

President Wilson's reply to Charles, and thus to the Pope, was firmly hostile. The U.S.A., said Wilson, admitted "the justice of the national aspirations of the Southern Slavs." It was for these people, he added, to decide what they would accept. As far as the U.S.A. was concerned, he concluded, it had already recognized Czechoslovakia as a belligerent independent State. The American reply had sealed the fate of Austria-Hungary.

On October 28, 1918, the Czechoslovaks declared their independence. On the 29th the Yugoslavs proclaimed theirs. On December 1 the Yugoslav Council invited the Regent, Alexander, in Belgrade, to proclaim the Union. The new independent kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes—Yugoslavia—had come into being.

The birth was welcomed in certain quarters—e.g. by the Allies—and was unwelcome in others—e.g. the Vatican—to which the new nation, besides being the unnatural creature of the Allies' political blindness, was a religious aberration not to be tolerated. Orthodoxy, swept away in Russia, where it had seemed unassailable, with the birth of Yugoslavia had now become paramount in a country the population of which was more than one-third Catholic. Worse still, in addition to permitting Orthodoxy to rule Catholics, Yugoslavia was preventing the latter from setting up a wholly independent Catholic community.

When to the above was added the fact that Yugoslavia, by her mere existence, represented the greatest obstacle to the long-range Catholic strategy, the Vatican's feeling, more than one of hostility, became one of implacable hatred, a wind which boded no good to the young nation. This hatred became the main inspirer of the Vatican's anti-Yugoslav strategy, the objective of which was the destruction of Yugoslavia. Having embarked on such a course, the Vatican began a vigorous campaign, the fulfilment of which to some extent depended on another factor: the collapse of Bolshevik Russia, the early disappearance of which was, at that period, taken almost for granted by everyone, particularly by the Allies, who had despatched sundry armies to hasten her

collapse. The Vatican counted, then, on a Russian collapse in order to execute its policy of a forced Catholic domination of the Balkan peninsula through the sword of Pilsudski. The creation of the Catholic Danzig-Odessa Polish Empire would have meant one thing: the death of Yugoslavia and other Balkan Orthodox and Protestant countries. When, however, Pilsudski's bloody adventure terminated and the Allies' efforts to destroy Bolshevik Russia relaxed, the Vatican changed its tactics, and embarked on a new policy: destruction of Orthodoxy by penetration, instead of by force. Consequently, when in 1920 Pilsudski's Catholic Empire vanished, and the Pope set out to convert Russia, a parallel policy was pursued in connection with Yugoslavia. Although the keynote of this new anti-Orthodox strategy was penetration, its tactics were different in each country. Thus, whereas in Russia they were meant to penetrate in order, in the long run, to dominate her religious life, in Yugoslavia they consisted of penetrating Yugoslav political life in order, once Catholics had come to control it, to enhance the power of Catholicism, and thus ultimately stultify, and indeed paralyse, the Orthodox Church throughout Yugoslavia.

Such a policy, vigorously promoted, mostly by ambitious, clerically-dominated Catholic politicians in Croatia, yielded no little success. In no time Catholic clericalism became a power behind the scenes, with the result that, within a few years, the Hierarchy began to exert undue weight in the administration, not only of Croat affairs, but also of those of Yugoslavia as a whole. This alarmed several honest Catholic Croats, notably Radich, leader of the powerful Croat Peasant Party, aware of the danger that such tactics were creating both for Yugoslavia and for Croats. Defying the Hierarchy—and thus indirectly the Vatican—he began to combat the Catholic Trojan-horse tactics, warning Croatia that, by permitting their politicians to be led by the Hierarchy in political matters, they were bound, sooner or later, to lead all Croats to disaster. Radich's counsel was followed; and for almost a decade Catholic strategy, weakened where it should have been at its strongest, was far less successful than if Radich had acted otherwise.

But in 1928 Radich was assassinated. The assassination coincided with the general overhaul of Vatican European strategy towards Communism. In that same year the Curia finally broke off its negotiations with Soviet Russia. The Papal Nuncio in Germany, E. Pacelli, led the powerful Catholic Centre Party sharply to the extreme Right, thus allying it with the forces which were to sky-rocket Hitler to power. In Italy the Vatican strengthened Fascism by signing a pact with Mussolini (1929). Fascist Catholic movements rose everywhere. An era of Catholic policy had ended, and a new one had begun. The policy of penetration had been replaced by one of active agitation and the swift mobilization of all the religious and political forces of Europe against Bolshevik Russia. Thus, while in the West the Vatican had launched upon a global hate campaign against Communism, in the Balkans, after Radich's death, it embarked upon a policy directed at the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

Radich's successor, Dr Macek, reorientated the Croatian Peasant Party into a rabid nationalist movement which, by becoming increasingly bold, became an active factor for the growing political tension inside Yugoslavia. From this period onward, Separatism became the key-word of Croat Nationalism, with the result that the latter began increasingly to play into the hands of the Catholic Hierarchy and thus into those of the Vatican.

The Vatican's policy in the first decade implied Yugoslavia's existence as a united nation; in the second—i.e. since the emergence of a naked Separatism—it overtly aimed at Yugoslav disintegration. In the promotion of the Vatican's new grand strategy, Yugoslavia was reckoned a major obstacle even more than in the past, in that now it was impeding the swift Fascistization of Europe and the eventual Fascist attack on Soviet Russia, with all the ensuing Balkan commotion which, it was hoped, would cause the tumbling of Yugoslavia itself. In connection with the latter, the Vatican laid down a three-fold policy: (a) the detachment of Catholic Croatia from the rule of Orthodox Serbia, (b) the setting up of Croatia as an independent Catholic State, and, last but not least, (c) the possible creation of a Catholic

Kingdom in the Balkans. For such goals to be attained, one thing was necessary: the partial or total disintegration of Yugoslavia.

To assert that Yugoslavia succumbed thanks only to Vatican machinations would be to falsify history. On the other hand, to minimize its role would be a crude historical distortion. Factors alien to religion played into its hands. These could be summarized as: the animosities of the Croats and the Serbs in the domestic field, the political ambitions of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany in the international.

Croat Separatism became an increasingly important factor as the internal and external tension grew. Its identification with Catholicism made it almost a blind tool of the Catholic Hierarchy, and thus of the Vatican, which unhesitatingly used it to further, not only its local interests, but also its vaster Balkan schemes of religio-political domination.

Croat Separatism as a useful tool of the Vatican came to the fore long before the birth of Yugoslavia. In the middle of the last century, when it was changed into an articulated force after Ante Starčević founded the Croatian Law Party, which, besides following a strongly Serbophobe line, fostered Croat chauvinism by advocating the conception of a "Greater Croatia" where there would be room *only* for Croats. That meant, only for Catholics, Croat having become synonymous, in such a conception, with Catholic.

Such an exclusive ideal was no mere vagary, as was proved by the Eastern Crisis of 1875-8, with its violent agitation for the incorporation of Bosnia into Croatia, as part of a Pan-Croat programme, which regarded another region, Dalmatia, as belonging *de jure* to the "Triune Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia," although during the Hapsburg Empire it was held *de facto* by Austria. Croat Separatism, however, depended for the implementation of its plans on the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Thanks to Austrian reaction, a Croat *rapprochement* with the Serbs, in spite of all their differences, became a reality. In 1905 this emerged in the shape of Croat and Serb Parties with a joint programme. The next year the Serbo-Croat

coalition in Croatia came into existence. Many hailed Serbia as the Piedmont of a future Yugoslav Union. During the First World War a number of Serbs and Croats formed a Yugoslav Committee in London, their programme being independence and union with Serbia.

In October, 1918, the Yugoslav National Council, which included Catholic Croats, repudiated the Catholic Emperor Charles' proposal for federalization of the provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in which Croatia was included. This, it should be noted, although the Catholic Croat leader knew that behind Charles' proposals stood the Pope.

As already mentioned, during the next decade the Croat leader, Radich, never tired of warning the Croats against following the Vatican in political matters; in this he echoed the voice of another great Catholic patriot, the leader of the Polish Nationalists, Roman Dmowski, whose slogan became a by-word of certain Catholic Polish Nationalists: "Never rely upon the Vatican in political affairs."

Hostility to Vatican political directives by Catholic political leaders was born out of bitter experience: e.g. during the First World War, when Roman Dmowski, having gone to Rome to ask for help to establish Polish independence, was greeted with open disfavour, such Vatican hostility being inspired by political interests identified with those of Austria and other great European Powers who had worked against Polish aspirations for centuries. The extraordinary result of this was that the Poles never got any support from the Vatican, even when they rose against the Czars—an attitude which incensed them to such a degree that one of their great national poets, Julius Slowacki, coined the famous warning: "Poland, thy doom comes from Rome." Which subsequent events proved was more than prophetic.

Radich adopted the same slogan, although with more tact. When, however, his Party was taken over by Macek, the original ideal of Ante Starčević was swiftly injected with a new overdose of undiluted extremism, which made it turn sharply to the extreme Right. The main exponent of this new trend was one Ante Pavelic, an individual obsessed by the idea of an independent Croatia, inspired by racialism, erected upon Fascism, wholly impregnated with Catholicism,

a formidably compact miniature totalitarianism. A movement sprang out of this weird conception; its backbone, a ruthless core of terrorist bands, led by Pavelic himself, whose policy consisted of blackmail, murder, plots, and assassinations. The shadow of powerful protectors from across the sea descended swiftly upon them, thus enabling them to carry on their activities in defiance of national or international procedure—e.g. from Italy and Germany, both of whom saw in Pavelic's Croatia a useful instrument for Fascist and Nazi expansion in the Balkans.

The expansionist policies of these nations often ran parallel with that of the Vatican, which, by skilfully manipulating them, could frequently promote its own interests. It did that, not by remaining only an aloof spectator of various Fascist and Nazi activities, but by promoting a most vigorous anti-Yugoslav policy of its own. This yielded a rich harvest sooner than was expected. While the Vatican's Fascist associates were busy engineering political or terroristic activities, Catholic diplomacy—as previously in Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, and France—came to the fore with the promotion of a powerful Catholic fifth column. This, which had already gnawed at the internal structure of Yugoslav unity, consisted of all those Croats infected with national-religious fanaticism, of the Catholic Hierarchy of Croatia, and of an illegal Nationalist Army composed of bands of Catholic terrorists, called the *Ustashi*, the last led by Ante Pavelic, supported by Vladimir Macek, leader of the Croat Peasant Party, who in 1939 arranged for Mussolini to finance him with 20 million dinars for the Croat Separatist Movement,¹ and by Archbishop A. Stepinac, leader of the Catholic Hierarchy in Croatia.

The specific role played by the Vatican followed the familiar pattern: use of the Hierarchy to help political and military plotters engaged in undermining or overthrowing the legal Government. Unlike its practice in other countries, however—e.g. Petain's France or Franco's Spain—here the Catholic Church attempted to erect, and indeed did erect, a State in complete accord with all her tenets. The result was a monster standing upon the armed might of twin totalitarianisms: the totalitarianism of a ruthless Fascist State and the

totalitarianism of Catholicism—the most bloodthirsty hybrid yet produced by contemporary society.

What gives to such a creature of Vatican diplomacy its peculiar importance is that here we have an example of the Catholic Church's implementing all her principles, unhampered by opposition, or by fear of world opinion.

The uniqueness of the Independent Catholic State of Croatia lies precisely in this: that it provided a model, in miniature, of what the Catholic Church, had she the power, would like to see in the West and, indeed, everywhere. As such it should be carefully scrutinized. For its significance, by transcending its local background, is of the greatest import to all the freedom-loving peoples of the world.

CHAPTER VI

THE YEAR OF POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS. THE MURDER OF A CHANCELLOR, OF A FOREIGN MINISTER, AND OF A KING

ONE day some time in 1933 an Austrian railwayman, having casually made a discovery which he thought might be of interest, was getting ready to inform his Union when he was approached by a functionary of the Austrian Government. What was the price for his silence? If he was willing to forget all about certain goods in certain carriages, a large sum would be put at his immediate disposal. The railwayman spurned the offer, passed the information to his Union, who handed it over to the Press.

Overnight an obscure occurrence became an international sensation, and what the Catholic Austrian Government had until then carried on in the utmost secrecy was promptly made known to the world. The Foreign Offices of Europe began to hum with unusual activity as the threads of a vast international plot, enmeshing half a dozen countries, gradually came to light.

What the railway trade unionist had discovered was that Austria was blatantly dealing in arms, with the connivance of Catholic Dictator Dollfuss. At this period Austria, in common with other defeated countries, was supposed neither to buy nor sell arms, nor indeed have anything to do with parties connected with arms production. The discovery disclosed to Europe that an armaments factory at Hinterberg, in Lower Austria, was in full production. More, that the Austrian factory was manufacturing rifles, not for the Austrian army, but for semi-Fascist Hungary. Highly placed officials of the Austrian Government, an extraordinary percentage of whom proved to be fervent Catholics, semi-Fascists, or, indeed, fanatical Fascists, were implicated in the smuggling.

The affair created a political furore. But more was yet to come. The rifles, it was eventually discovered, were not

for Hungary; they were being sent there solely as a temporary depot. The weapons in reality were intended for Fascist Italy.

Had that been the end of the story, the Austrian discovery would have caused sufficiently serious international repercussions. But that was by no means all. Further investigations proved that the ultimate destination of the weapons was with certain separatists who, in accord with Mussolini, were planning an armed rising, to detach themselves from their central Government. The separatists: certain Catholic Nationalists of Croatia. The central government they wanted to fight: that of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

The association of such extremists with an aggressive great Power had thus transformed a purely regional affair into an international plot. This raised awkward international complications, not merely of a diplomatic and political nature, but of a racial and religious character as well, which, by trespassing national barriers, affected the domestic and foreign policies of various countries, of which Fascist Italy was one. Mussolini had developed a grand expansionistic design of his own in connection with the Balkans. One of the first stepping-stones to its fruition was the partial or, if possible, the total dismemberment of Yugoslavia. This would have implied, not only the disappearance of a stumbling-block to Fascist Balkanic ambitions, but also the incorporation into Fascist Italy of former Yugoslav provinces, the most coveted of which was Dalmatia.

Italian-Yugoslav relations at this period became so strained that Mussolini began to toy with the idea of accelerating the political disintegration of the Yugoslav Kingdom by force of arms. This could result in war. Mussolini's aggressive plans were welcomed by none more than by certain Separatists (in Croatia). This for the obvious reason that a Fascist dismemberment of Yugoslavia would have given them the unique opportunity they dreamed of to set up an "independent Croatia." Mussolini, the most powerful Fascist dictator at that period, being in a position to bring about such changes, became therefore the main hope of all those who backed his anti-Yugoslav policy. These, realizing that their interests ran parallel with his, soon banked upon his active help.

The understanding was of a concrete nature, thanks mainly to the fact that Mussolini had become the protector of various terrorist bands operating throughout the Balkans, the chief aims of such bodies being the destruction of the Balkan *status quo*, which conformed with Fascist Italy's expansionist designs.

In Bulgaria one of these bands was run by members of the ORIM or VRMO (Organization Révolutionnaire Intérieure Macedonienne). Among other things, it was violently anti-Yugoslav. Because of this, one of its leaders, Ivan Mihailoff, nicknamed Vantcha, was subventioned by Mussolini with millions of lire. In April, 1929, Vantcha met Ante Pavelic, the Ustashi leader, near Sofia. Pavelic had recently fled from Yugoslavia into Catholic Austria, King Alexander having set up a special tribunal (January, 1929) for the protection of the State against the subversive Separatist activities of the Ustashi extremists, of whom Pavelic was the chief. The purpose of the meeting was to join forces against Yugoslavia, and to put the Bulgarian and Pavelic's terrorist organizations under the joint protection of Fascist Italy. In that year ORIM was granted 44 million lire. Pavelic visited Mussolini, and asked for financial help. He got 25 million lire, plus the promise of further financial aid and political protection to come.

On July 17, 1929, the Yugoslav Government condemned Ante Pavelic to death *in absentia*. Pavelic, invigorated by the Duce's money and blessing, went from Rome to Vienna to organize, with ORIM and Italian Fascist agents, nothing less than a plot for the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia. The plan of the assassination had been studied in all its details by Mussolini, who, to help Pavelic's work, granted him every facility. Pavelic organized his terrorist bands or Ustashi. At first a villa at Pessario was put at his disposal; then, when his bands grew, they were installed at the Fascist camp of Borgotaro, near Bologna, where they were reinforced by a brigade of the Fascist Secret Police, the OVRA. Pavelic was further supplied with a false passport, arms, and counterfeit Yugoslav money. All this with a view to achieving the first Mussolini-Vantcha-Pavelic objective: the assassination of King Alexander. A sum of 500,000 lire was promised

by Mussolini to the Ustashi who would execute the King. The attempt took place in Zagreb in 1933. It was made by Peter Oreb, a terrorist, but failed completely. Mussolini's anger knew no bounds. To make sure that the next attempt should not misfire, he charged his son-in-law, Count Ciano, with the task of organizing a second coup. Senator Bocini, Chief of OVRA, and Antonio Cortese, head of the Political Department of the Fascist Foreign Office, were put at Ciano's disposal.

Yugoslavia and France, meanwhile, owing to the deterioration of the political situation in the Balkans, were planning to strengthen the "Little Entente," the *Entente Balkanique*. Promoted partly by King Alexander himself, this went straight against the schemes, not only of Fascist Italy, but also of Nazi Germany, who had begun the promotion of a successor to the Kaiser's *Drang nach Osten*. Last but not least, it was anathema to Pavelic and his followers.

The better to consolidate the Entente, King Alexander planned to visit Bulgaria and France. On receiving this news, Count Ciano summoned Ante Pavelic and Vantcha Mihailoff to Rome. There, at the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, they discussed ways and means of killing the King. Mihailoff wanted to carry out the attempt at Sofia. Ciano, Bocchini, and Cortese, however, were against this, fearing that Boris, the Bulgarian King, might be killed at the same time. Boris was no mean King. The interests of three Powers depended for their success on his head being left on his shoulders. Boris's assassination, in fact, would have alienated Mussolini, the Vatican, and the House of Savoy. The preservation of Boris's life rested in the fact that he had married King Victor's daughter; that by such a marriage Mussolini counted on expanding Italian influence in the Balkans; and that the Vatican's plan was to have the Royal children brought up as Catholics, in order to install a Catholic king in Orthodox Bulgaria, and thus strangle the Orthodox Church there from above.¹

In order to avoid such risks, therefore, at the next meeting, which took place at the Hotel Continental in Rome, it was finally decided to kill King Alexander in France. Following this, Pavelic would stir up trouble in Croatia, while

the followers of Mihailoff rebelled in Macedonia. Mussolini would intervene to ensure their success, and thus, by setting a foot in the Balkans, carry out his expansionist scheme in those regions. Once these plans had been agreed, Mussolini met the plotters in his Villa Torlonia. These were Vlada Georgief Cernozemski, a Bulgarian, who had already killed two members of the Bulgarian Parliament in Sofia; Eugene Kvaternik, later head of the police of Zagreb in the Independent State of Croatia; and three more Catholic Ustashi, Kralj, Pospisil, and Raitch.²

On October 6, 1934, the plotters met in Paris. On October 9 King Alexander landed at the old port of Marseilles. As soon as the procession began, Cernozemski approached the royal coach in which King Alexander and Louis Barthou, the French Foreign Minister, were riding, and, to the cry of "Long live the King!" fired his revolver, killing both. Cernozemski was instantly killed by the police. His accomplices were arrested and sentenced to life-imprisonment,³ but Ante Pavelic managed to escape, and was condemned to death, *in absentia*, by a French tribunal.

But if the first part of the Mussolini-Pavelic plot had succeeded, the second, the Pavelic revolt in Yugoslavia, was a complete failure: nothing happened. Pavelic and Kvaternik fled to Italy. The French Government asked for their extradition, which Mussolini refused, going so far as to declare that if Yugoslavia pressed for Pavelic's extradition he would consider the request a *casus belli*. Yugoslavia appealed to the League of Nations. The League, being, like U.N.O., its successor, a pawn of the Great Powers, ignored the case and did nothing.

The assassination created turmoil throughout Europe. In Berlin the reaction was ominous: Nazi Germany accelerated the promotion of her *Drang nach Osten* policy. At the sudden elongation of the Hitlerian shadow over the Central European landscape, Mussolini became cautious. Hesitation and, above all, the growing power of Hitler weakened his resolution, and soon the Duce-Pavelic adventure, having become unwholesomely risky, was shelved, pending better times.

Hitler, meanwhile, had not been idle. He had been

plotting on his own, going so far as to develop a plan in Central Europe opposed to that of Mussolini, viz. the incorporation of Austria into Nazi Germany. This was being promoted at the very time when Mussolini and Pavelic were hatching their plot against Yugoslavia. Indeed, Hitler had decided on the assassination of the Catholic Dictator, Dollfuss, prior to Mussolini and Pavelic having carried out their plans against King Alexander. On July 25, 1934, in fact, a group of Nazis entered the Austrian Chancellery in Vienna, murdered Dollfuss, and attempted to seize the Government. Mussolini promptly dispatched two divisions to the Brenner Pass to impede Hitler from upsetting the Balkan equilibrium and thus throwing out of gear the schemes of Italian Imperialism in those regions. Hitler repaid Mussolini by cold-shouldering him after the killing of King Alexander.

The two assassinations, however, awoke Europe to reality. Mussolini and Hitler decided to forget their pride and reach a tacit agreement. Mussolini left Austria to Hitler, and Hitler supported Mussolini in his seizure of Abyssinia. From then onward Fascist-Nazi terror filled with ever-increasing echoes the political corridors of Europe and even of Asia: the assassination of the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss and of King Alexander of Yugoslavia in 1934, the Fascist war on Abyssinia in 1935, Hitler's occupation of the Rhineland in 1936, Japan's attack upon China in 1937, Hitler's incorporation of Austria in the spring of 1938, Munich in the autumn of that same year, Hitler's dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1939, Hitler's attack on Poland in the autumn of 1939.

While all these ominous events followed one another, Pavelic, directly in touch with Catholic and Fascist authorities, presided over sundry plottings and intrigues, turning now to Mussolini and now to Hitler, according to which of the ambitions of the two dictators seemed to have the greater chance of success. Pavelic's strategy consisted of submitting plans to both Mussolini and Hitler for waging a terrorist campaign throughout Yugoslavia in order to force the Central Government to grant autonomy to Croatia. With the approaching storm of the Second World War, however, Hitler, having fitted Yugoslavia into a vaster

scheme of his own, reorientated his policy and promoted one aimed at neutralizing Yugoslavia—indeed, at making her an ally. To avoid antagonizing the Yugoslav Government, Pavelic's activities were greatly reduced and officially discouraged.

Hitler's policy paid him handsome dividends. When the Second World War broke out, Yugoslavia remained stubbornly neutral. Indeed, on March 25, 1941, she entered the Nazi camp, signing a pact with Germany. Pavelic's dream seemed to have been flung into the dim future. Yet he continued to wait, in the hope that the day when destiny would call on him to implement his life's work was, perhaps, not far off.

CHAPTER VII

THE BIRTH OF A MONSTER: THE INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC STATE OF CROATIA

THE Yugoslavs were stunned. But not for long. Two days later, on March 27, 1941, an anti-Nazi *coup d'état*, carried out by General Mirkovic, unsaddled the pro-Nazi Yugoslav Government. While the rest of Yugoslavia celebrated the event in Zagreb, circulars, full of threats, were found on the doors of Serbs. Pavelic, who only a few days before had been relegated to the background, suddenly found himself the centre of feverish activities. Orders were conveyed to all the Ustashi, inside and outside Yugoslavia, to be ready for action. Ustashi leaders from Germany and Italy moved at speed towards the Yugoslav frontier. The German Army moved with them. On April 6, 1941, Hitler attacked the Yugoslav Kingdom.

Many of Pavelic's followers joined the Nazi invaders; others directed their arms against Yugoslavia; still others turned plain traitors—e.g. Colonel Kren, an active fanatic, a secret member of Pavelic's army, an Ustashi who flew from Belgrade aerodrome to give the Nazi Air Force the secret location of all Yugoslav aircraft, with the result that the Yugoslav war-planes were destroyed on the ground by Nazi bombers, which Kren directed. Thanks to Ustashi Kren's action, the whole of the Yugoslav Air Force was thus annihilated in one single blow.

While Belgrade was still burning after the Nazi air-raids, Ante Pavelic addressed the Croats by radio: "Croat soldiers," were his words, "use all your weapons against all the Serbian soldiers and officers. We are already fighting shoulder to shoulder with our new Allies, the Germans and the Italians."

On April 7 the Yugoslav Government left Belgrade for Montenegro. Two days later, on April 9, Vladko Macek,

its Vice-President, in his turn deserted it. Macek was a Croat, a Catholic, and the leader of the Catholic Croat Peasant Party. Yet this individual, while acting as the leader of that Party, and, indeed, as Vice-President of the Yugoslav Government, was simultaneously plotting with Fascist Italy for the disintegration of his country. As early as 1939 Macek had, in fact, established contact with Mussolini, who had agreed to pay him 20 million dinars to finance his bold Separatist plot—that is, to destroy Yugoslavia in order to set up a Catholic Fascist State of Croatia, as was subsequently disclosed by none other than the Fascist Foreign Minister, Count Ciano.¹

The Minister of Commerce, another Catholic, followed Macek's example, soon imitated by a third Minister, who treacherously and for a long time had been a secret member, not only of the Ustashi, but also of Nazi Intelligence. He was, in fact, a liaison with the main Nazi Intelligence Agent in Yugoslavia, D. Tomljenovitch, former Austrian officer and a Catholic, to whom he passed details of all the secret deliberations on defence which took place in the Yugoslav Cabinet, of which he was a member.

Following all this, while Slavko Kvaternik, having arrived in Zagreb from Italy, announced the formation of the Independent State of Croatia, Macek incited his followers to recognize the New State: "I invite all the members of the Peasant Party of Croatia to recognize the change, to help the New Croatia, and, above all, loyally to obey all its laws."² Within a few days all the secret members of Pavelic's Catholic terrorist organization within the civil administration and the Yugoslav Army came to the fore, working havoc wherever they appeared; and this to such an extent that they quickly succeeded in paralysing the prosecution of the war against Hitler.

Standing in sinister prominence among them all, the Ustashi initiated vigorous fighting in the rear of the Yugoslav units; while others within the Yugoslav Army carried out fifth-column activities to such an extent that nothing could be done according to plan. Ustashi officers like Colonel Kren fled to the Germans, to whom they disclosed vital military information. Units of Macek's "Peasant Guard"

immediately became Ustashi units and disarmed units of the Yugoslav Army. The widespread disorganization created by Catholic extremists was such that it turned out to be one of the paramount factors enabling the swift Nazi conquest of Yugoslavia.

This was confirmed by Lorkovitch, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Independent State of Croatia, in full Parliament (February, 1942):

"It was thanks to the support of the Croat people and of the Croat revolution, which have shortened the duration of the war in Yugoslavia, greatly reduced the losses of the Germans and Italians, and permitted, at the Eastern frontier of Serbia, the death-blow to be given to Yugoslavia."³

The promotion of such a large treacherous body within the country would have been impossible without the active co-operation of the Catholic Church. Pavelic's terrorist bands, the Ustashi, had been morally and financially encouraged and supported by her. Indeed, their backbone had been formed by priests, monks, and even bishops. Monasteries had been used as the clandestine headquarters of the Ustashi long before the Nazi attack. Secret separatist and military activities had been disguised for years under the cloak of religion. The Catholic priesthood in Croatia, Herzegovina, and Dalmatia had repeatedly convoked so-called Eucharistic Congresses which in reality were for extremist political purposes (e.g. those held in Pozega as late as 1940, under the fictitious name of Mary's Congregation). The sundry semi-military, illegal terrorist movements were likewise screened by the mantle of religion. Most of them were affiliated with Catholic organizations under the direct supervision of Catholic Action, which was strictly controlled by the Catholic Hierarchy—e.g. the Brotherhood of the Crusaders, with about 540 societies and 30,000 members; the Sisterhood of the Crusaders, with 452 societies and 19,000 members; the Catholic Student Associations, Domagoj, and such like.

Most of the members of such religious organizations were active in sabotage, acts of terrorism, and a good number of them even participated in the treacherous disarming of the

Yugoslav Army following Hitler's attack. As soon as they came into the open, many of them appeared transformed into Ustashi authorities, functionaries in Ustashi commissions, heads of district councils, or even of concentration camps. The President of the Great Crusaders' Brotherhood, Dr. Feliks Niedzelski, was nominated Ustashi Vice-Governor of Bosnia and administrative head for the Ustashi youth, while Father Grga Peinovic, also a director of Catholic Crusaders, was appointed President of the Ustashi Central Propaganda Office.⁴ Many of the priests of the Crusaders' Brotherhood and of Catholic Action took or gave military training, or were sworn officers of the Ustashi formations—e.g. Father Radoslav Glavas, a Franciscan monk, who on April 10 and 11, 1941, disarmed the local gendarmerie, captured the Post Office, and drew local plans to prevent the mobilization of the Yugoslav Army; or Father Chaplain Ivan Miletic, who, in collaboration with the Nazis, led bands of guerrillas against the Yugoslav Government. In Herzegovina the centre of the Ustashi movement was located in the Franciscan monastery and in the high school of Siroki Brijeg.

On the same day as the German Army had entered the capital of Croatia, one of the chief Ustashi leaders, Kvaternik, proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia (April 10, 1941), and, while fighting between the Germans and the Yugoslav Army was still going on in the Bosnian mountains, Archbishop Stepinac called on the leader of the Ustashi and urged all Croats to support the New Catholic State. On that very day the newspapers of Zagreb carried announcements to the effect that all Serbian Orthodox residents of the new Catholic capital must vacate the city within twelve hours, and that anyone found harbouring an Orthodox would immediately be executed. On April 13 Ante Pavelic reached Zagreb from Italy. On the 14th Archbishop Stepinac went personally to meet him and to congratulate him on the fulfilment of his life-work. What was Pavelic's life-work? The creation of perhaps the most ruthless Fascist tyranny ever to dishonour Europe.

- The establishment of Pavelic's dictatorship was rapid, efficient, and ruthless. Immediately on his return he reorganized the Ustashi throughout the New State by

setting up local branches, known by the names of Stozer, Logor, Tabor, and Zbir, through which he initiated a veritable reign of terror. The objective of his systematic crimes of murder, torture, pillage, and wholesale massacre was nothing less than the total extermination of all non-Catholic, anti-Fascist elements in the New State.

Simultaneously with the reorganization of the Ustashi, Pavelic set up a political body modelled on the Nazi Gestapo and on the Fascist Ova, called Ustashka Nadzorna Sluzba (Ustashi Supervisory Service), which exercised absolute control over the whole population. This Ustashi Gestapo was composed of thirteen different types of police: Ustashi Police; Intelligence Service; Defence Police; Security Service; Supreme Office for Public Order and Security; County Police; Gendarmerie; Military Police; Defence Squads; Security Service of the Poglavnik, a body-guard; Reserve Gendarmerie; Police Guard; and Industrial Police.

Parallel with this, Pavelic set up courts extraordinary, entitled Prijeki Sud; Pokretni Prijeki Sud (Mobile Courts); Izvanredni Narodni Sud (People's Court Extraordinary); and Veliki Izvanredni Narodni Sud (Grand People's Court Extraordinary). These courts, thirty-four in number, passed sentences after a procedure which did not offer the defendant any possibility of defence. The judges, all sworn Ustashi, condemned without examination of the charge, on the basis of *collective responsibility*. The courts could pronounce only death sentences, against which no appeal was allowed.

In addition to passing special legislation against anyone who refused to accept the New Croatia, to permit police organizations to arrest, deport, and execute at will, special tribunals to condemn to death on the flimsiest of pretexts, and, indeed, to mobilize the whole machinery of the State for legalized terror, Pavelic terrorized by means of a Statutory Order "For the direction of the Undesirable and Dangerous Persons to Compulsory Detention in Concentration Camps," dated September 25, 1941. In virtue of this, the Ustashi Supervisory Police could at will send "any undesirable persons dangerous to public order . . . to compulsory detention in concentration camps" (paras. 1 and 3). No appeal was allowed against any such decisions.

Within the briefest of periods, Pavelic and his Ustashi had become the arbiters of the freedom, the life, and the death of all men, women, and children in the New State of Croatia, which in a matter of weeks was thus converted into the most ruthless Fascist State in the world, including Nazi Germany. Yet what was the attitude of the Catholic Church when faced by such an abominable transformation? The Catholic Church, represented by the Hierarchy and the Catholic Press, following Stepinac's example, promptly initiated a feverish campaign of praise for Pavelic and Hitler. A leader of the Crusaders wrote :

" God, who directs the destiny of nations and controls the hearts of Kings, has given us Ante Pavelic and moved the leader of a friendly and allied people, Adolf Hitler, to use his victorious troops to disperse our oppressors and enable us to create an Independent State of Croatia. Glory be to God, our gratitude to Adolf Hitler, and infinite loyalty to chief Ante Pavelic." ⁵

A few days later, on April 28, 1941, Stepinac issued a pastoral letter, asking the whole Croatian clergy to support and defend the New Catholic State of Croatia.

At Easter, 1941, Stepinac announced from the Cathedral of Zagreb the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, thus giving the solemn sanction of Church and Vatican to Pavelic's work. On June 28, 1941, Stepinac, with other bishops, went to see Pavelic. After promising the whole-hearted co-operation of the entire Hierarchy, the Archbishop solemnly blessed Pavelic, as the leader of the Croatian people: " While we greet you cordially as head of the Independent State of Croatia, we implore the Lord of the Stars to give his divine blessings to you, the leader of our people." Pavelic, it should be remembered, was the same man who had been sentenced to death for political assassinations: once by the Yugoslav courts, and once by the French, for the murders of King Alexander and the French Foreign Minister, Barthou.

In his hour of triumph Pavelic did not forget that all those who had helped the birth of a strong united Yugoslavia had contributed to the death of the Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire, the political pet gendarme of the Vatican, and,



Top : The opening of a home for children at Tuškanac. Behind Pavelic and his wife are Stepinac and the Papal Legate.

Below : The Franciscan Miroslav Filipovic. Left, as a priest; right, in Ustashi uniform. Commandant of the concentration camp at Jasenovac.



Top : At an Ustashi meeting—from right to left, Archbishop A. Stepinac; General Roata, commander of Italian occupying forces in Yugoslavia; Field-Marshal Slavko Kvaternik, and the commander of German occupying forces in Croatia.

Below : The Serbs in the church before their massacre in Hrvatska Dubica, August 21, 1941.

significantly enough, as a belated tribute to the old Austrian-Vatican alliance in the Balkans, he ordered the confiscation of the real property of "any persons who had volunteered with the Allies against Catholic Austria-Hungary during the First World War" (Statutory Order, dated April 18, 1941).

This last move, like numerous others of a more tyrannical character, was followed with fascination by the Vatican, where the murderer of King Alexander came to be regarded as a great Catholic hero, blessed by none other than Pope Pius XII himself, who bestowed his paternal protection upon him and the New Croatian State. That was not enough. Pius XII, that holiest of all modern Popes, spun some of the most unholy diplomatic webs, with the specific object of bestowing upon the political creatures of the devout regicide Pavelic some kind of a king. For to the Catholic Church kings are, next to Catholic dictators, still her most cherished political dodos.

The throne of Croatia had originally been assigned to the scion of the Hapsburgs—i.e. Otto. As, however, Hitler suffered from anti-Hapsburg phobia, plans had to be somewhat modified. Otto had to be discarded. A feverish exploration amid the remaining forlorn royal crowned heads of Nazified Europe was speedily initiated. The new King's paramount virtue had to be a very obvious one: he must be *persona grata* to the Fuehrer.

Catholic Providence, which has always provided the Vatican with an uninterrupted shower of Peter's pence—or, to be more up to date, with an ever-increasing shower of Peter's dollars—again proved that her cornucopia could still supply a mankind confused by all the errors of republicanism with that increasingly rare commodity: kings. Now kings have become very rare and, in fact, exceptional. Hence the need for an exceptional man to carry out an exceptional commission. The man: Pope Pius XII.

Pius XII had been the recipient of portents—that is, of phenomena with which only saints, it is said, are privileged. This even though such phenomena as a rule occur after death, and always when a rational scrutiny of the miracles has become impossible. During the Conclave of 1939, con-

vened to elect a new Pope, Cardinal Pacelli was visited by Pius X in person. Pius X announced that the next Pontiff would be him, Pacelli. It was a miracle. It must have been, for Pius X had died almost three decades earlier. Pacelli was indeed elected Pope. The fact that he cast his own vote for himself did not really affect the issue. Pacelli became Pope Pius XII, choosing the name of Pius in honour of Pius X.⁶

Ten years later, in 1950, Pius XII, after patient years of self-canonization, saw the sun zig-zag in the sky of Rome. Not once, it must be noted, but on three successive days. As if this were not enough, the very Mother of God appeared to him, within the convulsed sphere, "in a spectacle of celestial movements, in *transmission* of mute but eloquent messages to the Vicar of Christ."⁷

It was not difficult for so extra-holy a successor of St. Peter, therefore, to find a worthy king. The fact that Pius XII had to conduct down-to-earth secret, hard bargaining with Mussolini was discreetly hushed up. The chosen one? Victor Emanuel, King of Italy, whom Pius XII himself not long before had blessed as "the august and wise Emperor of Ethiopia,"⁸ following Fascist Italy's ruthless conquest of Coptic Abyssinia, where Fascism and Catholicism were jointly to implant Catholic-Fascist civilization.

King Victor, although physically a midget, was a very brave man. He was already resignedly suffering under the weight of two crowns: the kingly crown of Italy and the Imperial crown of Abyssinia. The idea of a third, that of Croatia, fired him with the most admirable democratic conviction that three crowns upon the head of one single man might be considered by envious masses as a genuine social injustice. So Victor, for the first time in his life, took a decision. To the chagrin of that most virtuous trinity, Pope, Duce, and Pavelic, he shouted an immortal ditty, "Now then, that's truly much too much, even for me," and refused. Following a moment of bewilderment, and hasty confabulations with the other two members of the trio, Pius XII, thanks to a supernatural hint, found a priceless substitute: the cousin of Victor, the Duke of Spoleto.

The life of a mere Duke nowadays is somewhat dull.

The Duke of Spoleto, although a mere Duke, was born with above-average ducal ambition. Hence, when political fortune blew his way, he seized her tightly by the hair. Having first made quite sure that the somewhat moody Austrian commoner who had promoted himself to the Chancellorship of Germany approved of him, secondly that the son of a blacksmith from Romagna would smile on him, and last but not least that His Holiness Pius XII would give him a triple blessing, he accepted the royal Croatian sceptre with a blush. A name worthy of such a crown was selected, approved, and hailed. And so it happened that a poor unknown Duke suddenly found himself the head of a new dynasty in the Kingdom of Croatia, and became His Most Gracious Exalted Majesty, Tomislav II.

At such wonderful news a massive Ustashi delegation, led by Ante Pavelic, rushed to Rome, where, in the very seat of the Fascist Empire, on May 18, 1941, Tomislav II's gracious acceptance of the Croatian Crown took place, punctuated by clicking of military heels, Fascist salutes, and hurrahs. At the Vatican the happiness of the Pope was unbounded. Yet his fatherly heart was made a little heavy by the fact that Tomislav II, his triumphant political godchild, could not openly be given a solemn papal blessing.

Pius XII was the head of the Universal Church. Catholics by the million were at that very moment fighting with the Allies to smash that very Fascist world with which Pius was on such cordial terms. In addition to that, Pius was simultaneously the head of the Vatican State and as such—oh, happy coincidence!—a king himself. To recognize his new royal colleague at that juncture would have been interpreted by the democratic camp as a breach of "papal neutrality." His Holiness, therefore, had to use caution.

Popes can unlock gates—in heaven and in hell. That is why they have St. Peter's massive keys. But very often they can open back doors as well. Down here. And, the world being what it is, that is even more important. Particularly on occasions when the official gates of international diplomacy have to remain firmly closed. Adept in the age-old Catholic Macchiavelliana Pius XII solved the riddle triumphantly. He received good King Tomislav *one day*

before the ceremony of his coronation. Who could say this was a breach of "papal neutrality"? The Duke of Spoleto was not yet officially a king. His Holiness the Pope had received him before he had legally become His Exalted Majesty, King Tomislav II.

That same day Croatia was officially proclaimed a kingdom. The devout murderer of King Alexander of Yugoslavia—that is, Pavelic—was granted a long and very private audience by the Pope. Only one stenographer, who cautious Pavelic had brought with him and who was made to take the oath never to reveal what he heard, was present.

Strengthened by what Pius XII had told him, Pavelic called on Mussolini, with whom he signed a treaty. Following all this, the indefatigable Holy Father received and solemnly blessed Pavelic's Prime Minister and his whole *Ustashi delegation*. Who, again, could label this a breach of "papal neutrality"? All those excellent people had been received merely as "Catholic individuals," not as the heads of the Government of the New Croatia, declared the *Osservatore Romano*. *Honi soit qui mal y pense*. Yet the real significance of it all did not escape those who knew. Pius XII had granted all those good people a special audience, not because they were mere "Catholic individuals": he had specially received, specially blessed, and specially praised them because, while members of the Mother Church, they were, above all, the representatives of the newly born Independent Catholic State of Croatia, a political creature stubbornly nurtured and ruthlessly promoted by that most malign of all its conceivers, the Vatican.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NIGHTMARE OF A NATION

THE Independent Kingdom of Croatia, having thus officially sprung into existence, set forth with burning zeal to fulfil all the hopes so obstinately entertained by its religious and political promoters: the Vatican and Fascism. Inspired by the graciously remote majesty of good King Tomislav II, under the patronage of His Holiness the Pope, protected by Hitler, watched by Mussolini, ruled by Catholic terrorists, and policed by Catholic bayonets, the New Croatia began to transform itself into the ideal commonwealth as advocated by Catholic tenets.

A State, however, according to papal dicta must be regulated not only by civil but also by religious authority. So Pavelic, having determined that a religious equivalent of himself should partake of the rights and duties of rulership, saw to it that the head of the Hierarchy became a *de facto* ruler of the New Croatia. Archbishop Stepinac, the Croatian Primate, and others, members of the Hierarchy, the religious equivalent of the Ustashi, were duly elected members of the Sabor (Totalitarian Parliament). The military, political, and religious architraves of the new State having thus been erected, Pavelic and Stepinac set out to transform its whole structure into what a true Catholic-Fascist State should be. Movements, institutions, men, and everything else were made to conform to the letter and spirit of Catholicism. All potential opponents—Communists, Socialists, Liberals—were either banished or imprisoned. Trade unions were abolished, workers' organizations became pitiful caricatures of their former selves, the Press was paralysed when it was not altogether gagged, freedom of speech, of expression, and of thought became memories of the past. Every effort was made to dragoon youth into Catholic semi-military formations; the children were marshalled by priests and by nuns. Catholic teaching, Catholic tenets, Catholic dogma

became compulsory in all schools, in all offices, in all factories, and everywhere the iron heel of the new State was felt. Catholicism was proclaimed the main religion of the State. Other religions and those professing them were ostracized, chief among these, the Orthodox; while the Jews were compelled to wear the Star of David on their clothes, all members of the Orthodox Church went in fear for their property, their personal and family safety. To be Orthodox had suddenly meant to be a potential victim. Soon, in all parks and public transport vehicles, a new inscription appeared: "Entry forbidden to all Serbs, Jews, Gypsies, and dogs." The Ministry of the Interior, led by Andrija Artukovitch, issued the following decree: "All the Serbs and the Jews residing in Zagreb, the Capital of Croatia, must leave the town within 12 hours. Any citizen found to have given them shelter will be immediately executed on the spot."

While Ante Pavelic was transforming Croatia with a mailed fist, his religious equivalent, Archbishop Stepinac, facilitated the revolution by a timely nation-wide mobilization of the whole of the Catholic Church. No opportunity was allowed to pass without Stepinac openly singing the praises of, or sprinkling with oral or holy-water blessings, the new Catholic Croatia, her great Leader Pavelic, the Duce, and the great Fuehrer. When dates commemorating the bloody ascent of Fascism to power were celebrated in Fascist Italy or in Nazi Germany, Stepinac, although in Croatia, celebrated them with no less fervour. Thus he punctiliously celebrated October 28, the day when, in 1922, the first Fascist dictatorship was installed in Italy. While Mussolini annually paraded his Black Shirt battalions in Rome on that date, Stepinac annually commemorated the march with speeches, prayers, and congratulations, distributed with equal generosity also to Hitler on his ever-gloomier succeeding April birthdays. When it came to his own new Fascist State, however, the archiepiscopal panegyrics became impassioned recommendations for everything done by the New Croatia. After Parliament was convoked in February, 1942, Stepinac, with all the sacred authority of the chief pillar of the Mother Church, asked the Holy Ghost to descend upon the sharp-

edged knives of the Ustashi, and to settle, at least while the parliamentary session lasted, upon the brow of Pavelic. Special prayers and extra ounces of incense were offered in all Catholic churches on Pavelic's birthday.¹

When the pocket-sized Ustashi Navy departed for the Black Sea, to destroy, side by side with the Germans, the Red Navy of godless Russia, Stepinac, flanked by Dr. Ramiro Marcone, the representative of that lover of peace, Pius XII, celebrated the triumphal departure in Zagreb, surrounded by the Catholic Hierarchy, mumbling Latin incantations for speedy victory by those brave aquatic crusaders. Stepinac's colleagues imitated their leader with unmatched zeal—e.g. Bishop Aksamovic, of Djakovo, who was personally decorated by Pavelic because "His Excellency the Bishop has from the very beginning co-operated with the Ustashi authorities." Or Archbishop Saric—the bosom friend of Jure Francetic, the commander of the Black Legion—who raised his right hand in the Ustashi—that is, the Nazi—salute at every opportunity, public or private.

The transformation of the Catholic Hierarchy into a *de facto* Ustashi Hierarchy had a most dreadful significance. It meant that the whole machinery of the Catholic Church in Croatia had been put at the complete disposal of the ruthless individuals determined to make of the new State a compact political and military unit, cemented by the most secure guarantees of the State's indestructibility. Such a policy implied, not only the transformation of the Croatian social, cultural, and political fabric, but also the complete extirpation of whatever was "alien" to Croatian stock and to its national religion. This required the total elimination of whoever was not a Catholic Croat. Not an easy task, as a large portion of the new State was composed of bulky racial-religious groups wholly foreign to Ustashi Catholicism. Out of a population of 6,700,000, in fact, only 3,300,000 were Croats. Of the remainder, 700,000 were Moslems, 45,000 were Jews, followed by sundry smaller minorities. Over 2,000,000 were Orthodox Serbs.

The inclusion in the New Croatia of so many alien elements was due to the territorial ambitions of Croat Separatism. These, as we have already seen, had been epitomized in the

conception of the "Greater Croatia" of Ante Starčević, who founded an extreme political party, the Croatian Law Party, subsequently elevated to the level of a fanatical National programme by Ante Pavelic. The Party's ideology, although one of racial and religious exclusiveness, accepted geographical expansion. This meant the inclusion in an independent Croatia of disputed territories, and hence of non-Catholic elements, which became automatically the greatest obstacle to the complete Catholicization of the new Croat State. To solve the problem, a policy directed at the swift elimination of all the non-Croat, non-Catholic population was adopted and promptly set in motion. This was repeatedly and publicly enunciated by members of the Ustashi Government—e.g. on June 2, 1941, in *Nova Gradiska*, Dr. Milovan Zanitch, Minister of Justice, declared:

"This State, our country, is only for the Croats, and not for anyone else. There are no ways and means which we Croats will not use to make our country truly ours, and to clean it of all Orthodox Serbs. All those who came into our country 300 years ago must disappear. We do not hide this our intention. It is the policy of our State, and during its promotion we shall do nothing else but follow the principles of the Ustashi."

Dr. Mile Budak, Minister of Education and of Cults, lost no time in enlightening his listeners of the nature of such principles. During his first Press interview as a Minister, when asked what the policy of Croatia would be in relation to the non-Croat racial and religious minorities, his reply was an ominously simple one: "For them" (the minorities), he said, "we have three million bullets." This was not the boasting of a fanatical individual. It was the epitomization of a policy, coolly planned by Pavelic in concert with the Catholic Hierarchy, which was set in motion immediately the Nazis invaded Yugoslavia. Dr. Milovan Zanich, Dr. Mirko Puk, Dr. Victor Gutich, Ustashi Ministers, unhesitatingly declared that the New Croatia would get rid of all the Serbs in its midst, in order to become 100 per cent Catholic "within ten years." On July 22, 1941, the plan was again officially confirmed by Dr. Mile Budak: "We shall kill one part of the Serbs," were his words, "we

shall transport another, and the rest of them will be forced to embrace the Roman Catholic religion. This last part will be absorbed by the Croatian elements." Ways and means to enact such a scheme were swiftly adopted. The most radical and the most ruthless: mass removal of Serbians from the contested zone. According to the Ministers, one-third of these were to be transported to Serbia proper, one-third would be "persuaded" to embrace Catholicism, and the remainder would be "disposed of" by other means. "Other means" soon signified biological extermination, and "persuasion" forcible conversion.

Conversion and extermination spelt one thing: the total annihilation of the Orthodox Church. That, in fact, turned out to be the official policy of the New Catholic State of Croatia. Such a policy was formally put forward in Parliament by, among others, Dr. Mirko Puk, the Ustashi Minister of Justice and Religion: "I shall also make reference to the so-called Serbian Orthodox Church," he said. "In this regard I must emphatically state that the Independent Croatian State cannot and will not recognize the Serbian Orthodox Church."²

Pavelić's triple programme was made to operate simultaneously everywhere, following the establishment of the New State. Its execution was simple, direct, and brutal. It ranged from hurried decrees—like that issued by his new Minister of Public Instruction only four days after Hitler's attack (April 10, 1941), which barred members of the Serbian Orthodox Church from entering the University *unless they had given up the Orthodox faith before April 10, 1941*—to wholesale deportations, like those carried out on July 4 and 5, 1941, by the Ustashi in Zagreb; to the massacre of men, women, and children, like that of Ključ, on July 31, on August 31, on September 1 and 2, 1941, when the "Flying Ustashi" summarily executed approximately 2,000 Serbs.³

In a State insanely bent on a policy of racial-religious extermination, laws and legality, when observed, were nothing but tragic mockeries. The Courts Extraordinary already mentioned, for instance, always condemned regardless of evidence, did not permit the right to appeal, and their sentences had to be carried out within three hours of pro-

nouncement. Thus, these courts sentenced an immense number of people to death without offering them any opportunity for defence, and their sentences were strictly applied. In most cases the courts punished "collectively," under the guise of "trials." One bench alone, for instance, that of Zagreb, within two days—August 4 and 5, 1941—sentenced to death 185 persons; that of Srem, from August 3 to 25, 1942, 217 persons; the proceedings at the mobile court at Ruma on August 3, 1942, lasted only two and a half hours, during which twenty-six persons were sentenced to death. At Stara Pazova, on August 8, 1942, the court proceedings lasted only half an hour, and eighteen people received the death sentence. At Ruma on August 10, 1942, a defending counsel appointed by the Ustashi handled the defence of twenty-five persons, whom he met for the first time at the trial, the chairman of the bench allowing him only two minutes for each person. The Tribunals, a most tragic mockery of justice, were veritable instruments of extermination, as proved by the fact that within four years one bench alone of the mobile court extraordinary of Zagreb, headed by Ivan Vidnjec, sentenced to death 2,500 citizens.

But while the Tribunals had at least a semblance of legality, the Ustashi found means to exterminate thousands of persons by a quicker method—i.e. by dispatching them to concentration camps and disposing of them there. The institution and supervision of these camps were exclusively in the hands of Pavelic, who personally attended to their management. The arrests and deportations to these camps rested with the Ustashi, who could send to them anyone they judged to be an "unreliable person," and who had absolute authority to kill immediately on arrival anyone taken there. Indeed, there "was agreement," to quote Ljubo Milos, Commandant of the Jasenovac concentration camp, "that all sentenced to three years, or not sentenced at all, were to be liquidated at once."³ By virtue of this, inmates of the camps were murdered indiscriminately, either individually or collectively, without even a legal excuse. Thus, in March, 1943, the inmates of the Djakovo Camp were purposely infected with typhus, causing the deaths of 567 persons; on September 15, 1941, all those inmates of the Jasenovac camp

who were unable to work, numbering between 600 and 700, were killed; in the camp of Stara Gradiska, 1,000 women were killed. Of 5,000 Orthodox Serbs being taken to Jasenovac camp at the end of August, 1942, 2,000 were killed *en route*, the remainder were transferred to Gradina, where on August 28 they were done to death with hammers. In the Krapje Camp, in October, 1941, 4,000 prisoners were murdered; while in the Brodice Camp, in November, 1941, 8,000 prisoners were killed. From December, 1941, to February, 1942, at Velika Kosutarica, at Jasenovac, over 40,000 Orthodox Serbs were massacred, while in the Jasenovac camp, in the summer of 1942, about 66,000 Orthodox Serbs, brought from the villages of the Bosnian Marches, were slaughtered, including 2,000 children.

Children were not spared, and special concentration camps were set up for them. Nine of these were at Lobar; Jablanac, near Jasenovac; Mlaka; Brodice; Ustici; Stara Gradiska; Sisak; Jastrebarsko; and Gornja Rijeka. The destruction of infants in these places would be incredible, were it not vouched for by eye-witnesses, one of whom has testified:

"At that time fresh women and children came daily to the Camp at Stara Gradiska. About fourteen days later, Vrban [Commandant of the Camp] ordered all children to be separated from their mothers and put in one room. Ten of us were told to carry them there in blankets. The children crawled about the room, and one child put an arm and leg through the doorway, so that the door could not be closed. Vrban shouted: 'Push it!' When I did not do that, he banged the door and crushed the child's leg. Then he took the child by its whole leg, and banged it on the wall till it was dead. After that we continued carrying the children in. When the room was full, Vrban brought poison gas and killed them all." ⁴

At his trial, Ante Vrban protested that he had not killed hundreds of children personally, "but only sixty-three." ⁵

In 1942 there were some 24,000 children in the Jasenovac camp alone, 12,000 of whom were cold-bloodedly murdered. A very large portion of the remainder, having subsequently been released following pressure by the International Red Cross, perished wholesale from intense debilitation. One

hundred of these infants, aged up to twelve months, for instance, died *after release* from the camp because of the addition of caustic soda to their food.

Dr. Katicic, Chairman of the Red Cross, shocked by these mass murders, lodged the strongest protest, threatening to denounce to the world this mass slaughter of infants. As a reply, Pavelic had Dr. Katicic flung into the concentration camp of Stara Gradiska.

That was not all. Even worse horrors—if worse there could be—took place in Pavelic's concentration camps. There were cases when the victims were burned alive :

“ The cremation at Jasenovac took place in the spring of 1942. In this they meant to imitate the Nazi camps in Germany and Poland, so Picilli had the notion of making the brickworks into a crematorium, where he did succeed, out of 14 ovens (7 a side) in making an oven for cremating people. There was then a decision *to cremate people alive*, and simply open the huge iron door and *push them alive into the fire* already alight there. That plan, however, excited terrible reaction among those who were to be burned. People shrieked, shouted and defended themselves. To avoid such scenes, it was resolved first to kill them and then to burn them.” ⁶

The representatives of the “ only true Church ” not only knew of such horrors : not a few of them were authorities in these same concentration camps, and had even been decorated by Ante Pavelic—e.g. Father Zvonko Brekalo, of the concentration camp of Jasenovac, who was decorated in 1944 by the leader himself with the “ Order of King Zvonimir ”; Father Grga Blazeitch, Assistant to the Commandant of the concentration camp of Bosanski-Novi; Brother Tugomir Soldo, organizer of the great massacre of the Serbs in 1941; and others.

The worst abominations could hardly have been surpassed by the deeds of these individuals, the vilest betrayers of civilization and of man.

CHAPTER IX

THE TRIUMPH OF TERRORISM

To complement the wholesale man-handling, torturing, and legalized killing of the Ustashi, another terrible instrument, perhaps the most execrable of all, struck with fear an already terrorized population: the "punitive expeditions" carried out by Pavelic's own special militia, the Ustashi, who in no time acquired such an infamous notoriety as to equal the most abominable human monsters of the past. These expeditions destroyed houses and villages, arrested, tortured, plundered, and often massacred their inhabitants, usually without even bothering about any excuse or appearance of legality. Whole districts, such as Bosanska Krajina, Lika, Kordun, Banija, Gorski Kotar, Srem, and regions of Slavonia, were completely laid waste by them. Numerous small towns, such as Vojnic, Slunj, Korenica, Udbina, and Vrgin-Most, were entirely destroyed, while wholesale massacres took place at a number of places, such as Rakov Potok, Maksimir (near Zagreb), the Vojnovic plateau at Bjelovar, the Osijek town park, and Jadovno in Lika. At the last-named place victims were wired together in groups of twenty, taken to the edge of a 1,000-feet cliff, where the Ustashi killed the first persons only, so that they dragged the others down alive with them.

Pavelic participated personally even against Croat villages—e.g. on December 1, 1941, when Cerje, Pasnik, and Jesenje were razed, on which occasion seven women, four children, and nine old men were killed and thrown into a burning house; or in 1945, when the village of Jakovlje was razed, after most of its inhabitants had been murdered.

In April, 1941, in the village of Gudovac, 200 Serb peasants were killed by Ustashi, followed by larger groups in the villages of Stari Petrovac, in the district of Nova Gradiska, and in Glina. There, in the early days of May, 1941, Ustashi from Karlovac, Sisak, and Petrinja gathered together all males

over fifteen years of age, drove them in trucks outside the town, and executed them all.

Often the executions were committed in the homes of the victims, with the most primitive weapons. Some Ustashi specialized in disposing of their charges by crushing their skulls with hatchets, or even with hammers. Incredible but authenticated atrocities were committed wherever the Ustashi appeared. At Dubrovnik, Dalmatia, for instance, Italian soldiers took pictures of an Ustashi wearing two "necklaces." One was a string of cut-out eyes, the other of torn tongues of murdered Serbs.¹

Mass deportations and mass executions, mainly in isolated small towns and villages, were well-planned operations. As a rule, the procedure was a simple one. Ustashi authorities summoned groups of Serbs under the pretext of recruitment for military service or public works. Once rounded up, they were surrounded by detachments of armed Ustashi, taken outside the village, and executed. In the mountainous regions of Upper Dalmatia, like Bosnia and Herzegovina, women and children were taken to remote spots and massacred. In Brcko, the home town of Dzafer Kulenovic, Ustashi Deputy Prime Minister, the prisoners were executed on bridges and then thrown into the river.

At the beginning of May, 1941, the Ustashi besieged Glina, and, having gathered all Orthodox males over fifteen years of age from Karlovac, Sisak, and Petrinja, drove them outside the town and killed all 600 of them with guns, knives, and sledge-hammers. The following day all the other Serbs were also murdered. The centre of the massacre was in the village of Bosanski Grabovac.

On August 3, 1941, over 3,000 Serbs were likewise massacred in Vrgin-Most. On July 29, 1941, Bozidar Cеровski, chief of the Ustashi police in Zagreb, arrived in the locality of Vojnic; having rounded up more than 3,000 Serbs from Krnjak, Krstinje, Siroka Reka, Slunj, Rakovica, and other villages, he led them to Pavkovitch, where he had them all massacred near a village mill.

In the villages of Baska, Perna, and Podgomolje, Bosanska Krupa district, in the summer of 1941, 540 women and children were locked in houses, which were then set on fire.

In the village of Crevarevac about 600 people were burned in their houses. In the district of Cazin, at Mlinici Smiljanic, more than sixty women and children were burned to death. Five hundred people were massacred at Bugojno. At Slavonska Pozega, 500 peasants, brought from Bosnia, were killed. In some districts of Srem, in the summer of 1942, over 6,000 Serbs were killed. At Bihac, within one single day in June, 1941, 2,000 Serbs were killed; while during July and August of the same year over 12,000 more were massacred. In the Bosanska Krupa district, in the summer of 1941, a total of 15,000 people were killed.

Such mass murders were carried out in the most systematic fashion, and were often planned directly from Zagreb. At times they were semi-legalized by statutory orders. For instance, on October 2, 1941, Pavelic issued a "statutory order" that in any case of attack against the Ustashi, as a reprisal, without any court procedure, ten persons to be chosen by the police were to be shot. On October 30, 1943, in another "statutory order" he ordered reprisals by shooting, hanging, or sending to concentration camps hostages to be chosen by the police, together with their parents, children, and spouses. On June 30, 1944, he appointed a special Deputy for pronouncing such measures of reprisal. Under these orders a large number of citizens were shot, hanged, or taken to concentration camps without any trial. At Ruma on August 14, 1942, for instance, ninety hostages were shot; at Sremska Mitrovica, on August 19, 1942, another ninety; and at Vukovar, on August 25, 1942, 140 hostages.

The worst atrocities, strange as it may seem, were carried out by members of the intelligentsia. The case of Peter Brzica is undoubtedly one of the most incredible in this category. Peter Brzica had attended the Franciscan College at Siroki Brijeg, Herzegovina, was a law student, and a member of the Catholic organization of the Crusaders (Krizari). In the concentration camp at Jasenovac, on the night of August 29, 1942, orders were issued for executions. Bets were made as to who could liquidate the largest number of inmates. Peter Brzica cut the throats of 1,360 prisoners with a specially sharp butcher's knife. Having been proclaimed the prize-winner of the competition, he was elected

King of the Cut-throats. A gold watch, a silver service, and a roasted sucking pig and wine were his other rewards. A doctor, Dr. Nikola Kilolic, himself a Croat, was an eyewitness in the camp when the event took place, and subsequently testified to the authenticity of this astonishing deed.²

Mass murders were supplemented by the massacre of individuals and of small numbers, as part of the well-calculated policy of the Government, which had them carried out uninterruptedly in rural districts, with a view to terrorizing the populations. Cases of the utmost ferocity which occurred all over Croatia would be unbelievable were they not authenticated. In September, 1942, the Ustashi carried out a raid on the village of Dukovsko, and killed anyone on sight. Among other deeds they threw eight men into a pit. One of these saved himself by getting hold of a protruding rock. The Ustashi, noticing this, amused themselves by hurling heavy stones at him until he dropped to the bottom and died. Others—mostly people who were related, or members of the same family—were tied together and similarly thrown into a pit. In July, 1941, a youth of sixteen, Slavko Popovic, was taken by the Ustashi to a field, ordered to dig a grave, killed while doing so, and buried in it. On September 20, 1942, a group of escaping people were caught by the Ustashi. All of them—fifty-four men and women—were massacred, their bodies heaped up and set on fire. In June, 1943, the Ustashi, passing through the village of Zijimet, rounded up those who had not had time to escape—seventy-four old men, women, and children—put them into a shed, which they set on fire. All were burned alive. Among them were the aunt and her two children of Vojislav Zivanic, who lost twenty-five members of his large family, including his father and brother, massacred by the Ustashi during these raids.³

These were not isolated instances. The Ustashi more often than not massacred all the inhabitants of Serb villages, callously torturing and killing even children, and then setting the villages on fire. In the village of Susnjari, for instance, the Ustashi, after having killed most of the inhabitants, led away about twenty surviving children, whom they tied to the threshold of a big barn, which was then set on fire. Most of the children, of an average age of about ten, were burned



Franciscan Bozidar Brale, making a speech, at Zemun, 12 July 1942, escorted by armed Ustashi. Notice the large letter U in the middle, which stands for Ustashi.

*Das u oceru hrasti: Ibi slova su
svijeta gjerani: I gini gol koji se njeni.
upis pobjegiti ovu indom Dajpim.
Prima je napade proslator Europe, sero
sve rlyo zastitnjom. Na nama
morala, nema nada, nema stin
inna frade, nema postupa.*

"All in all the Croats and Serbs are two worlds, the North and South Pole, which can never come closer without a miracle from God. Schism is the greatest evil of Europe, almost greater than Protestantism. [In it] there is no moral, no principle, no truth, no justice and no honesty."

(Extract from Stepinac's Diary in own hand, p. 176, Book IV.)



A collection of the Catholic Press in Pavelic's puppet State, all showing Pavelic's portrait.

alive. The few who survived, horribly scorched, were eventually killed.⁴ Eye-witnesses testified to similar occurrences :

"In the village of Gorevac, on September 13, 1941, children of about 3 years of age were impaled. In some places mothers threw themselves down with children in their arms, and one stake perforated mother and child. Some young girls had their breasts tied or cut, others had their hands made to pass through them. Men had their ears and noses sawn away, and eyes had been uprooted from their sockets."⁵

On April 28, 1941, Ustashi encircled the villages of Gudovac, Tuke, Brezovac, Klokocevac, and Bolac, in the district of Bjelovar, arresting 250 Orthodox peasants, among whom was Stevan Ivankovitch and the Orthodox priest, Bozin. Having led them all to a field, the Ustashi ordered them to dig their own graves; after which their hands were tied behind their backs and they were *pushed alive into their graves*. This feat created a commotion even among the Nazis, who set up a Committee charged with the specific task of exhuming the bodies and taking photographs as evidence. The "oral process" was incorporated in an official document of Nazi Germany, under the title of *Ustachenwerk bei Bjelovar*.

In a memorandum drafted by an officer sent to protect the Orthodox population of Eastern Bosnia during the terrible massacre of August, 1941, there was, among other things, the following :

"During our journey towards the hill of Javor, near Srebrenica and Ozren, all the Serbian villages which we came across were wholly deserted. But inside the houses very often we find whole families massacred. We even came across some barrels filled with blood. In the villages between Vlasenica and Kladanj we discovered children who had been impaled upon stakes, their small members still distorted by pain, resembling insects stuck upon pins."⁶

In the town of Sisak the Ustashi arrested an Orthodox Serb industrialist, Milos Teslitch, well known for his kindness, and *burned him alive*. One of those most responsible for this crime was Catholic Ustashi Faget.⁷

To crown all these horrors, some Ustashi did not hesitate

to crucify their victims. To mention only two: Luka Avramovitch, former member of Parliament, and his son, who were both crucified and then burnt in their own home in Mliniste, in the district of Glamoc.⁸

Such atrocities occurred with a frequency that shocked even the Ustashi's ideological allies: the Italian Fascists and the German Nazis. This to such an extent that on more than one occasion both the Italian and the German authorities not only deprived the Ustashi of the command of whole regions, but actually ousted them altogether, replacing them with Italian or German troops, to prevent a repetition of the terrible individual and mass murders committed by Pavelic's Catholic units. It will suffice for us to mention two typical cases which led to such a replacement.

On August 2, 1941, the Ustashi authorities of Vrgin-Most and of Cemernica announced that all Serbs who did not wish to be molested had better assemble on the following day at 3 a.m. in Vrgin-Most, where Catholic priests would be waiting to convert them to Catholicism. About 5,000 people followed this advice. Instead of Catholic priests, units of Ustashi, armed with machine-guns, encircled the assembled crowd, who were held prisoners until the following day, when they were all massacred. Among them were thirty-seven children under ten years of age.⁹

Not long afterwards, on August 20, 1941, another unit of the Ustashi arrested all Serbs in the neighbouring region of Lijevno, took them to the woods of Koprivnica, between Bugojno and Kupres, and killed them all. A few days later they arrested all the surviving families, whom they also massacred on the same spot. Before the massacre, women and even young girls were raped, after which most of them had their breasts cut and arms and legs broken. Some old men, before being executed, were blinded by way of having their eyes cut with knives or torn from their sockets.¹⁰

Five hundred women and children were hurled into pits in the hills of Tusnica and Komasnica, while another eighty women and children were massacred in the village school of Celebic.

The Italian Fascist authorities were so shocked by such incredible cruelty that, in addition to dispatching their troops

to protect the surviving population and occupying the region of Lijevno and neighbouring places, they dispersed the Ustashi and sent a protest to Zagreb.

Ustashi were committing no less abominable atrocities in other parts of the country. In the town of Prijedor, for instance, during the night of July 31-August 1, 1941, they massacred 1,400 men, women, and children, leaving their corpses to rot in the houses and in the streets. The Nazis nearby, horrified at such wholesale butchery, entered the town, compelling the Ustashi to leave. The Nazis had records of massacres of their own second to none. Yet the horrors committed by Pavelic's Ustashi troops proved to be of such bestiality as to shock even them: a most crushing evidence that the Ustashi massacres had surpassed anything experienced even by the Germany of Hitler. The magnitude of the butchery can best be gauged by the fact that within the first three months, from April to June, 1941, 120,000 people perished thus. Proportionately to its duration and the smallness of the territory, it had been the greatest massacre to take place anywhere in the West prior to, during, or after that greatest of cataclysms, the Second World War.

CHAPTER X

"CHRIST AND THE USTASHI MARCH TOGETHER"

If the first ingredient of Ustashi super-nationalism was race, the second was religion. The two could hardly exist independently, having been so closely intertwined as to have become almost synonymous. The word Croat, in fact, signified Catholic, as much as, in Croatia, Catholic came to signify Croat. If this was useful to Ustashi racialism, it was no less beneficial to Catholicism, in so far as, once the theory had been established that Catholic meant Croat, the idea that Croatia had to be totally Catholic not only became firmly rooted: it was turned into one of the basic tenets of the new State.

The results of such an identification were portentous. For, while nationalism had embarked upon a policy of 100 per cent racialism, the Catholic Church had embarked upon an inevitable parallel policy of 100 per cent Catholicism. The two policies were in effect one single policy, the political authorities automatically furthering the religious interests of Catholicism, while the religious authorities furthered the political interests of Ustashi racialism.

The actual process of integrating the two into an inseparable organic, religio-political unit, not only was conducted by individual Catholics or Catholic organizations, like the Crusaders, or Catholic political leaders like Macek: it was promoted by the Catholic clergy prior to the birth of the Ustashi State. Catholic priests, in fact, vigorously preached Fascism before the Second World War. The Catholic Press, controlled by them, became Fascism's mightiest propaganda organ. In it they advocated the Fascist Corporate State, praised the Fascist Catholic dictators, and preached racial theories—e.g. the theory that the Croats were not of Slav descent, but were Gothic German. One of the founders of this race theory was a well-known Catholic priest, Kerubin

Segvic, who as far back as 1931 wrote a book entitled, *The Gothic Descendance of the Croats*, with a view to creating racial odium against the Slavs, which was synonymous with "Orthodox." Fascist nations were hailed as glorious examples for the future Croatia. In its issue of April 3, 1938, for instance, the Catholic daily, *Hrvatska Straza*, praised Fascist Hungary for "solving the social problem by accepting the main principle of the Christian Corporate State." The same paper, on March 2, 1938, greeted the Anschluss with: "Young Croatia for Anschluss."

The Catholic Press preached Catholic Nazism on the model of that planted in Slovakia by the Catholic Nazi dictator priest, Mgr. Tiso: The Zagreb *Katolicki List*, the organ of Archbishop Stepinac, in January, 1940, carried an article entitled "Catholicism and Slovakian National Socialism," which read in part:

"In a modern state, which placed the interests of the people above all other considerations, the Church and the State must co-operate in order to avoid all conflicts and misunderstandings. Thus, in accordance with the teachings of Christ, the Church in Slovakia had already exerted itself to arrange a new life for the Slovakian people.

"The views of Dr. Tuka are fulfilled by the formation of a 'people's Slovakia,' which has the approval of the President of the Republic, Mgr. Dr. Josip Tiso. In the National-Socialist system in Slovakia, the Church will not be persecuted. Persecutions will be used against the opponents of National-Socialism."

The achievements of Catholic Fascism were continually glorified in Hungary, in France under Catholic Pétain, in Spain under Catholic Franco. The chief Catholic daily, *Hrvatska Straza*, the editor of which, Dr. Janko Shimrak, became a bishop under Pavelic, openly and consistently praised Hitler's successes in domestic and foreign policy. In the issue of March 12, 1938, Hitler's occupation of Austria was defended and praised. Later this paper hailed Hitler's successes in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and France. The *Katolicki Tjednik*, organ of Catholic Action, published under the direction of the Archbishop of Sarajevo, Dr. Ivan Saric,

printed articles entitled "A New Order Must Come" (e.g. in issue No. 4, 1941), before Hitler attacked Yugoslavia.

The Catholic Press, by propagating Nazi-Ustashi ideas, played a tremendous role in conditioning the people to what eventually happened, reaching as it did people in all walks of life. Its influence was great, and helped to an enormous extent to represent Pavelic and the Ustashi as having been sent by God to the Croatian people. It became especially skilful in sowing the seeds of religious hatred towards the Serbs, racial hatred towards the Jews, and hatred for Yugoslavia. Immediately after the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia it placed itself unreservedly at the disposal of the Ustashi, thus following the example of the Catholic clergy, who took an active part in helping the Ustashi, with weapons in their hands, in the disruption of the Yugoslav Kingdom.

At many points Catholic priests, and even Catholic friars, helped to form treacherous Ustashi armed bands with the precise objective of attacking the Yugoslav Army from the rear. Many of these clerics boasted openly of their military activities. The exploits of others who fell in battle were recalled in their obituaries.

The Catholic weekly, *Nedelja*, in its issue of June 22, 1941, describes in an article entitled, "The Last Convulsion of Yugoslavia on the Island of Pag," the manner in which the priest on that island took part in disarming the Yugoslav Army:

"Late at night younger Croatians would follow the development of events. The Reverend Stipanov in Vlasici on Pag would also listen to the news and ride to inform the officers and soldiers. Thus the new events found us prepared and enthusiastic. It was decided to disarm the officers from Serbia."

The Ustashi paper, *Hrvatski Narod*, on July 4, 1941, hailed the Franciscan priest Dr. Radoslav Glavas as a great organizer of the Ustashi. The article said in part:

"A young and energetic Franciscan, Dr. Radoslav Glavas, came to Siroki Brijeg and placed himself at the head of the struggle. A plan was even drawn to prevent the mobilization of the Yugoslav Army. Thus the historic day of April 10 was

welcomed, and in the night between April 10 and 11 the Ustashi disarmed the local gendarmerie and captured the post office."

The Ustashi periodical, *Za Dom*, No. 1, of April, 1941, adds:

"Another priest, joining forces with two customs guards, captured two generals and 40 officers, while a Franciscan brother, with the help of a number of youths, disarmed an entire Serbian company."

Hrvatski Narod, No. 251, of June 4, 1944, page 3, carried a death notice, written by priest Eugen Beluhan, of Chaplain Ivan Miletic, which in describing his Ustashi activities asserted: "As a priest he assisted in the disruption of the Yugoslav Army during the revolution." There is an endless list of such reports in the files of the War Crimes Commission.

Following the fall of Yugoslavia and the rise of the independent State of Croatia, the Catholic Press came all out for Pavelic and his Ustashi. *Vjesnik Pocasne Straze Srca Isusova* (The Courier of the Honourable Guards of Christ's Heart) contained, in issues Nos. 5 and 6, 1941, an article entitled, "The Banner of Croatia—the Heart of Christ," in which the "resurrection" of Croatia was compared to that of Christ:

"In the early spring the Croatian people experienced their resurrection at the time of Christ's resurrection. The great son of the Croatian people returned and gave them their liberty and ancient rights. And this is also the work of God; the Lord did it all and that is why it is strange to our eyes."

Glasnik Biskupije Bosanske i Sremske (The Voice of the Bosnian and Srem Bishoprics), No. 13, of July 15, 1941, imitating Pope Pius XI, who had called Mussolini the man sent by Divine Providence, called Pavelic a man of Providence:

"Holy is this year of the resurrection of the Independent State of Croatia. The gallant image of our chieftain appeared in the rainbow. It can and it must be said of him that he is a man of Providence."

Glasnik Sv. Ante (The Voice of Saint Anthony), in its

issue of December 12, 1941, went further, declaring that the birth of the Independent State of Croatia was God's work:

"The Croatians, who are mostly a Catholic people, consider such a great historical event as some fortunate accident, or as a stroke of luck. No, *this is the work of God and Providence.*"

Even this was not enough. The Ustashi were compared to no one else but Christ. Witness the voice of the Crusader movement, *Nedelja*, which, in its issue of June 6, 1941, in an article entitled, "Christ and Croatia," declared the following:

"*Christ and the Ustashi and Christ and the Croatians march together through history. From the first day of its existence the Ustashi movement has been fighting for the victory of Christ's principles, for the victory of justice, freedom, and truth. Our Holy Saviour will help us in the future as he has done until now, that is why the new Ustashi Croatia will be Christ's, ours and no one else's.*"

Catholic leaders, priests, and indeed bishops were given positions in the Ustashi State. Immediately after Pavelic assumed power many priests were appointed to local and provincial administrative posts in the newly created Ustashi State. To mention only a few: the Catholic priest Ante Klaric Tepelun, from the village of Tramosnica, district of Gradacac, who in April, 1941, became an Ustashi *tabornik* and took part in disarming the Yugoslav Army. Father Emanuel Rajich, priest in Gornji Vakuf, who participated in disarming the Yugoslav Army, organized Ustashi rule in Gornji Vakuf, and was appointed Ustashi *tabornik*, in which capacity he organized the first Ustashi army unit in Gornji Vakuf.

Novi List, No. 54, in 1941, reported the appointment of priest Stjepan Lukic to the post of *logorni pobocnik* (camp adjutant) of the Zepce camp. Cecelja Martin, priest in Recica, District of Karlovac, was appointed to the post of Ustashi *tabornik* for the county of Recica. Dr. Dragutin Kamber, priest in Doboj, was appointed in April, 1941, to the post of Ustashi commandant for the District of Doboj, with all political and civil power thus concentrated in his hands.

No. 34 of the same paper, dated July 1, 1941, carried an order of the Government appointing priest Didak Coric to the post of *tabornik* in Jaska; Ante Djuric, priest in the village of Divusa, to the post of *logornik* for the district of Drvar; and priest Dragan Petranovic to the post of *pobocnik* in the camp for the district of Ogulin.

Catholic leaders directly under the orders of the Hierarchy were given the highest positions—e.g. the President of the Crusaders, priest Dr. Felix Niedzielski, who was made Ustashi Vice-Governor of Bosnia during the first days of the Pavelic regime. Another Catholic priest, Grga Peinovic, Director of the Crusaders, was made nothing less than President of the Ustashi Central Propaganda Office, as reported in *Nedelja* on August 10, 1941. In an article entitled, "Crusaders in the Independent State of Croatia," the same paper pointed to the fact that many persons trained in the Crusader organization were now occupying high offices, which was indeed true.

The active participation of so many Catholic leaders and Catholic clergy in the formation of the Ustashi State of Croatia had been possible only thanks to one thing: the consent of, and indeed instructions from, the leaders of the Catholic Hierarchy. This was proved from the very first by the incontrovertible fact that high and low clergy co-operated whole-heartedly with Pavelic. Catholic parishes, as well as Catholic Cathedrals, and, indeed, the very radio, were used as a political platform for Pavelic and the Ustashi. Witness Radio Zagreb, which on April 11, 1941, the day after Kvaternik and the German Army had entered the Croatian capital, instructed the people to welcome the German Army and "to seek answers to all questions from the Catholic parish offices, where instructions will be given about the future work."

The official organ of the Archbishopric of Zagreb, *Katolički List*, No. 16, 1941, declared that the independent State of Croatia had been created by an all-powerful Providence. The Catholic Church, it concluded, prayed God that the New Croatia should find its fulfilment. The same paper went farther, and soon afterwards published "The Principles of the Government of the Independent State of Croatia and of

the Ustashi Movement," to acquaint its readers with the basic directives regulating the life of every individual in the new puppet State. These directives soon helped Pavelic to convert Croatia into a virtual concentration camp.

Archbishop Stepinac, on April 28, 1941, issued a pastoral letter, in which he asked the clergy to respond without hesitation to his call that they take part in the exalted work of defending and improving the Independent State of Croatia, declaring that from then onwards in the "resurrected" Croatian State the Church would be able in complete freedom to preach "the invincible principles of eternal truth and justice." The pastoral letter, which was also published in *Nedelja* and *Katolicki List* on April 28, 1941, said the following:

"Honourable brethren, there is not one among you who did not recently witness the most significant event in the life of the Croatian people among whom we act as herald of Christ's word. These are events that fulfilled the long-dreamed-of and desired ideal of our people. . . . You should, therefore, readily answer my call to do elevated work for the safeguarding and the progress of the Independent State of Croatia. . . . Prove yourselves, honourable brethren, and fulfil now your duty toward the young Independent State of Croatia."

The pastoral letter was read in every Croatian parish. It was also read over the radio. The impression it had on the people, and especially on the clergy, was indicated by Father Peter Glavas, who, during his trial after liberation, said in his own defence: "The order given by Archbishop Stepinac to the people over the radio to fight for the Independent State of Croatia constituted a political directive to the clergy." Like any other priest, he had to obey.

The Ustashi section of the clergy, which had been active in terrorism even before the war, did not need this circular to tell them how to act. Yet many who until then had hesitated, after Stepinac's instructions accepted his directives and actively engaged in supporting the Ustashi. The Catholic clergy did not join the Ustashi merely to chant Latin hymns. They joined in order to carry out the Ustashi racial and religious terror pogroms.

When Pavelic returned from Italy to Zagreb, to assume

leadership of the New Croatia, he stopped in the town of Ogulin, on April 13, 1941, where he conferred with one of his most fanatical lieutenants, the Ustashi Catholic priest Canon Ivan Mikan. On that same day, in a public speech, Canon Mikan foretold the shape of things to come: "There will be purges," shouted priest Mikan. "*Yes, there will be purges.*" On the same evening, not far from that region, the first Ustashi punitive expedition attacked individual Serbs in several villages.

Were these massacres committed only by the followers of Pavelic? They were often promoted and carried out by Catholic priests claiming to be the followers of Christ and the representatives of a Church trumpeting to the four winds that she preached universal love. It will suffice for us to mention only a few.

The first Ustashi commandant in the District of Udbina was the Franciscan priest, Mate Mogus, who had organized the Ustashi militia and disarmed Yugoslav troops. At a meeting in Udbina on June 13, 1941, he gave the following homily: "Look, people, at these 16 brave Ustashi, who have 16,000 bullets and who will kill 16,000 Serbs, after which we will divide among us in a brotherly manner the Mutilic and Krbava fields"—a speech which was the signal for the beginning of the slaughter of Serbs in the district of Udbina.

In Dvor na Uni, priest Anton Djuric kept a diary of his activities as an Ustashi functionary. The diary shows that on his orders the Ustashi plundered and burned the village of Segestin, where 150 Serbs were murdered, and that in the village of Goricka he arrested 117 people, who were sent to a concentration camp, where most of them were killed.

A group of Franciscan priests, who tortured and finally killed twenty-five Serbs in the village of Kasle, took photographs of their victims.

In the village of Tramosnica, priest Ante Klaric became the first Ustashi commissar, and personally led Ustashi units in attacks on Serbian villages. He organized the Ustashi militia and, according to witnesses, spoke from the pulpit as follows:

"You are old women and you should put on skirts, for you have not yet killed a single Serb. We have no weapons and no

knives and we should forge them out of old scythes and sickles, so that you can cut the throats of Serbs whenever you see them."

Priest Bozo Simlesa, in the village of Listani, was one of the most active members of the Ustashi. He held the post of chief in the district of Livno. During the slaughter of the Serbs in the county of Listani he told the people from the pulpit that the time had arrived to exterminate all Serbs living in Croatia. He personally organized the Ustashi militia and obtained arms for them. On July 27, 1941, he held a meeting in the village, and when he was informed that all Serbian men had been murdered and that women and children were to be killed that night, he told them not to wait for the night, for twenty-four hours had already passed since the chief had issued his order that not a single Serb must be left alive in Croatia.

The Catholic Dean of Stolac, in Herzegovina, priest Marko Zovko, was responsible for the murder of 200 persons, whose bodies were thrown into a ditch in a field in Vidovo.

Franciscan Mijo Cujic, of Duvno, personally gave instructions for the massacre of Serbs in the villages of Prisoje and Vrla, where not one person was allowed to remain alive.

Were these the abominable deeds of some few individuals maddened by religious and racial fanaticism? Indeed they were not. They were an integral part of the official policy of the Catholic Church, which, screened behind the mantle of the Independent State, had inspired and promoted all the horrors which soaked the historical land of Croatia in a sea of blood.

CHAPTER XI

CATHOLIC FRIARS, PRIESTS, EXECUTIONERS, BISHOPS, AND MURDERERS

As Ustashi racialism had embarked upon a policy of Serbian extermination, it followed that its twin counterpart, Catholicism, could do no less than embark upon the extermination of its main religious foe: the Orthodox Church. State and Church, consequently, to implement their mutual scheme of total racial-religious exclusiveness, set out to pursue parallel policies, epitomized in the extermination of the racial elements, the Serbs, by the political authorities, and in that of the religious elements, the Orthodox, by the Catholic Hierarchy.

The Catholic Church did not leave the execution of a religious war to the secular arm, as she had done in similar circumstances in bygone centuries. She came down into the fighting field, full tilt, shunning precautions and brandishing the sword against those whom she had decided to exterminate, with a directness that had not been seen for a long time. Many of the Ustashi formations were officered by Catholic priests, and often by friars, who had taken an oath to fight with dagger and gun for the "triumph of Christ and Croatia." Many of them did not hesitate to carry out the most infamous tasks, glorying in deeds that would have filled with shame any average "heathen or barbarian from the East." All in the name of religion. Thus, while some, as we have already seen, took charge of concentration camps, others led the armed Ustashi in the closing of Orthodox churches, in the confiscation of Orthodox records, in the persecution, arrest, and, yes, even in the murder of Orthodox people, including Orthodox priests. At Banjaluka, for instance, an official order directed that all the Orthodox Church records of marriages, baptisms, and burials be delivered forthwith to Catholic parishes, while at Pakrac Catholic priests took possession of the Serbian Bishop's

residence, following the locking and sealing of the Orthodox cathedral (April 12, 1941).

Orthodox churches were converted into halls—e.g. that of Prnjavor, on July 10, 1941. Others were transformed into Catholic churches, when they were not pulled down altogether—e.g. in the provinces of Lika, Banija, and Kordun, where 172 churches were totally destroyed. Orthodox monasteries shared the same fate. At Fruska Gora fifteen Serbian Orthodox monasteries and churches were given to Catholic monks of the Franciscan order, as was also done with the Church properties at Orahovica, Pakrac, Lepavina, and other places. The monastery of Vrdnik-Ravanica, wherein were buried the remains of King Lazar, who led and died in the historical battle of Kosovo against the Turks in 1389 in defence of Christianity, was also taken over, as was Sremski Karlovci, the former seat of the Orthodox Patriarchate. There the great cathedral was first plundered of all valuables, then closed, after all its physical properties had been taken over by the Catholic Bishop. Within a short period 250 Orthodox churches were pillaged or destroyed. In the diocese of Diakovo, mentioned before, twenty-eight Orthodox churches became Catholic churches.

Together with the destruction of Orthodox churches, Catholic ferocity struck at the very backbone of the Orthodox Church: i.e. at the Orthodox clergy. Orthodox priests were imprisoned, sent to concentration camps, hunted down, or simply massacred. Hundreds of them, including Orthodox Bishops, perished, only because they were priests of a religion hostile to the "true Church."

Orthodox priests, before being executed or hanged, were often horribly tortured—e.g. priest Branko Dobrosavljević, from Veljun, who was compelled to read the obituary of his own son, whom the Ustashi first killed in his presence, this preceding his own torture and death, which became the signal for the mass execution of hundreds of Orthodox inside the Orthodox churches of Kladusa, Veljun, Slusnica, Primislje, and other places. On April 20, 1941, in the village of Svinjica, the Ustashi arrested the Orthodox priest, Babic, and after torturing him buried him in an upright position to his waist in the ground. Within a few weeks the Ustashi

and Catholic priests murdered 135 Orthodox priests, of whom eighty-five came from one diocese.

The higher clergy were not spared. On the night of June 5, 1941, on orders of the Ustashi chief, Gutic, the Orthodox Bishop Platon, of Banjaluka in Western Bosnia, together with several Orthodox priests, some of whom were former members of the House of Representatives, was taken to the outskirts of the town by the Ustashi. There the old Bishop's beard was torn out, a fire lit on his naked chest, then, after prolonged torture, he and all his companions were killed with hatchets, and their bodies thrown into the Vrbanja River.

Dositej, Orthodox Bishop of Zagreb, capital of the Independent State of Croatia, where Archbishop Stepinac had his residence, lost his reason as a result of the tortures inflicted upon him before his expulsion to Belgrade. Three Orthodox Bishops, Peter Zimonjic of Sarajevo, Sava Trljajic of Plaski, and Platon of Banjaluka, were murdered.¹

Numerous Catholic priests and monks, some of whom were not even attached to the Ustashi formations, carried out indiscriminate executions with their own hands. Many of them methodically and with precision took part in the most incredible orgies of blood. Canon Ivan Mikan, already mentioned, made daily rounds of the prison and mercilessly beat Orthodox Serbs with a bull-whip, scolding the Ustashi for being lax in their work, personally ordering that the Orthodox monastery of Gomirje be looted and its inmates sent to a concentration camp, where they were all executed. Fra Anto, a Catholic priest of Tramosnjica, organized Ustashi bands with the object of capturing as many Orthodox Serbs as he could, whom very often he tortured personally, as he did at Brcko. Simic Vjekoslav, a monk of the monastery at Knin, personally killed numerous Orthodox. Sidonije Solc, a monk of the Franciscan monastery in Nasice, deported the Orthodox population of whole villages, while the Catholic priests Guncevic and Marjanovich Dragutin, in addition to acting as police officials, ordered the arrest of hundreds of Orthodox, whom they tortured and then killed, taking an active personal part in their execution.² German Castimir, abbot of the monastery in Guntic, personally directed the mass murder of the Orthodox Serbs of Glina, a

hundred of whom were murdered inside the Orthodox church there. The names of many others have been put on record by the Serbian Eastern Orthodox diocese of the U.S.A. and Canada, by the Orthodox Church of Yugoslavia, by the Yugoslav Government, and by other official agencies.³

The purpose of all this terror was to destroy the enemies of Catholicism. Yet, while the Catholic Church, whenever given total power, can become a ruthless destroyer of her enemies, bursting with dreams of expansion, she can simultaneously follow a no less ruthless campaign of absorption. Absorption can be accomplished by only one means: by conversion.

The Catholic Church has never believed in persuasion, which is used only when she cannot enjoy absolute power. Her actions have always been based on one of the most incontrovertible and typical Catholic dogmas: naked force. This, not only to smite, but also to convert. In Croatia she used force to do both, destruction and conversion having been, in all her wars of religion, two facets of the same grand strategy.

It was thus that, while demolishing Orthodox churches, while massacring Orthodox clergy and bishops, she was at the same time converting their congregations to Catholicism, using a "persuasion" behind which stood boycott, threats, force, and even death. Catholic priests became the natural leaders of this specialized operation, priests and monks competing to see who could convert most Orthodox to the "only true faith."

The spirit in which the campaign was conducted can best be judged by a typical leaflet, issued in 1941, by the diocesan journal of Djakovo, which read:

"The Lord Jesus Christ said that there shall be one pasture and one shepherd. Inhabitants of the Greek-Eastern faith, hear this friendly advice. . . . The Bishop of Djakovo has already received thousands of citizens in the Holy Catholic Church, and these citizens have received *certificates of honesty from State authorities*. Follow these brothers of yours, and report as soon as possible for re-Christening into the Catholic Church."

This was not a unique example of Catholic "persuasion"

backed by the bayonet. Priests openly told Orthodox to become Catholics if they wished to avoid persecution, concentration camps, and extermination. Franjo Pipinic, priest in Pozega, for instance, carried out mass conversions of Serbs towards the end of 1941, with the assistance of the Ustashi Captain Peranovic, telling the Serbian people that acceptance of Catholicism was the only way in which they could save themselves from death in concentration camps. In the files of the Commission for Investigating War Crimes there are hundred of cases of this "persuasion," of which we quote only a few.

One of the most fanatical missionaries for conversion was priest Ante Djuric, in the district of Dvor. He ordered the slaughter, plunder, and burning of many villages, and sent hundreds of Serbs to the concentration camp in Kostajnica. He personally mutilated and killed Serbs from Bosanska Kostajnica. In his speeches he always emphasized that the Serbs in his district "have only three ways out: to accept the Catholic faith, to move out, or to be cleansed with the metal broom."

Priest Ambrozije Novak, Guardian of the Capucine monastery in Varazdin, in 1941 went to the village of Mostanica, accompanied by Ustashi, and ordered the Serbian people to assemble, telling them: "You Serbs are condemned to death, and you can only escape that sentence by accepting Catholicism."

Priest Mate Mogus, of the parish of Udbina, in the province of Lika, was even more explicit: "Until now, my brothers," he preached in his church, "we (the Catholics) have worked for our Catholic religion with the cross and the book of Mass; the day, however, has now come to work with the revolver and the gun."

Some, however, wanted to use guns to bring an abundant crop of forcible conversions on a far larger scale. The words of Father Petar Pajic, published in the organ of the Archbishop of Sarajevo, bear witness to that: ⁴

"Until now, God spoke through papal encyclicals . . . And? They closed their ears. . . . Now God has decided to use other methods. He will prepare missions. European missions. World missions. They will be upheld, not by priests, but by

army commanders, led by Hitler. The sermons will be heard, with the help of cannons, machine guns, tanks and bombers. The language of these sermons will be international."

Such sentiments were shared by priests holding the most influential positions—e.g. Mgr. Dionizije Juric, one of the heads of the Ministry of Cults, and, more important still, the confessor of none other than Ante Pavelic himself. When in Staza, in the district of Banija, Father Juric put the matter of forcible conversions in a nutshell: Any Serb who refused to become Catholic should be condemned to death, he said, because "today it is no longer a sin to kill a child of seven, should such a child be opposed to our movement of the Ustashi."

The Ustashi had committed and were committing massacres beyond counting. Yet the devout Catholic Mile Budak, in an address at Karlovac on July 13, 1941, did not hesitate to declare that "the movement of the Ustashi is based upon religion." Catholics who had any qualms about it could reassure themselves simply by examining the professions of many of the leaders of the Ustashi, a great proportion of whom were monks, priests, and even bishops—e.g. Dr. Ivan Saric, the Archbishop of Sarajevo, an Ustashi since 1934. This pillar of the Holy Catholic Church, as soon as Catholic terror descended upon Croatia, spoke and acted as the veritable Ustashi that he was, inciting his subordinate clergy to act as Ustashi, and indeed "to employ revolutionary methods to the service of the truth, of justice and of honour"; words which he repeatedly printed in his *Katolicki Tjednik*, where he never tired of declaring that "it is unworthy of the disciples of Christ to think that the struggle against evil (*sic*) could be conducted in a noble manner and with gloves on." This in addition to writing poems to Pavelic, and inciting all Catholics to follow Pavelic's example and the example of the Ustashi.⁵

But if open refusal of conversion spelt death, acceptance of "the true faith," although very often an insurance of terrestrial life, was not always a guarantee of safety. The slightest reluctance on the part of the Orthodox individuals, any obvious indication that they were becoming Catholics as a

means of saving themselves, very often aroused Catholic vengeance. Apart from that, there were times when the call to conversion became only an excuse for wholesale massacre.

Curate Ilija Tomas, from the village of Klepac, for instance, was responsible for the death of hundreds of Serbs in that district. In order more easily to capture frightened victims who were fleeing to the mountains, he promised that no harm would befall them if they would embrace the Catholic religion. When many, believing this, called on him, he turned them over to the Ustashi, who murdered them all.

In the village of Stikade, in Lika, Catholic priest Morber, leader of the Ustashi, invited the Serbs to be converted to the Catholic religion. Because those who accepted his proposal to be converted showed some reluctance, the Ustashi surrounded and massacred them with rifles and hammers and threw their bodies into a ditch. When the bodies were dug up later it was established that many had been alive when buried.

Josip Orlic, priest in Sunja, an old sworn Ustashi, compelled the Serbs in his district to accept Catholicism by threatening them with concentration camps. A great majority of the Serbs there changed to Catholicism, in fear for their lives. But as many of those re-christened made it clear that they did so to save their lives, they were carried away to the Jasenovac concentration camp in May, 1942, where practically all of them were killed.

Some priests and monks specialized in forced mass conversions. The Ustashi priest Dionizije Juric, the Franciscan and close friend of Pavelic whom we have already mentioned, was appointed to head this division, which devised a plan for the systematic conversion of those Serbs who had been spared from persecution and massacre.

The daily mass murders taking place before them became the most powerful weapon of mass persuasion. Many followed the "friendly advice" and were "converted." Conversions of individual and mass character became increasingly frequent. Most of these were duly announced in the Catholic Press. *Katolicki List*, organ of the Bishopric of Zagreb, controlled by Stepinac, in its issue No. 38 in 1941, for instance,

reported that "a new parish of over 2,300 souls" had been created in the village of Budinci, as a result of the entire village having been re-christened to the Catholic Faith, and added that the preparations for the re-christening had been made by a Franciscan from Nasice, Father Sidonije Solc. A similar mass conversion in the vicinity of Osijek, carried out by Father Peter Berkovic, was described in *Ustaska Velika Zupa*, No. 1372, of April 27, 1942:

"His work covers the period from preparation of the members of the Eastern Orthodox Church for conversion to Catholicism until they were actually converted, and thus in the counties of Vocin, Cacinci, and Ceralije, he converted more than 6,000 persons."

An Ustashi administrator, Ante Djuric, priest of Divusa, forced all heads of families to assemble round their local teacher, bringing a 10 dinars tax stamp, in order to write out petitions for conversion for themselves and their families. The alternative: forfeiture of their residences and posts. The curate of Ogulin, Canon Ivan Mikan, charged 180 dinars for each forced conversion, so that in one Serb village alone—Jasenak—he collected 80,000 dinars.

A frank admission of how these mass conversions were made was given by *Nova Hrvatska*, an Ustashi paper, on February 25, 1942: "The re-Christening was carried out in a very solemn manner by the curate of Petrinja, Michael Razum. *An Ustashi company was present at this solemn occasion.*"

The re-christenings, as they were euphemistically labelled, were frequently celebrated with, in addition to water, blood. Priest Ivan Raguz had no inhibitions about it. He repeatedly urged the killing of all Serbs, including children, so that "even the seed of these beasts is not left." His worthy colleague, the curate Bozidar Brale, from Sarajevo, took part in Serbian liquidation with gun in hand, loudly postulating the "liquidation of the Serbs without compromise." The Spiritual Board of the Archbishop of Sarajevo was eventually to see Brale. As a culprit before an ecclesiastical tribunal? Far from it. As that Catholic body's President.

With the Catholic Hierarchy as the brains of such a policy of terror, with the ruthless armed Catholic bands at their disposal, the expected occurred. Individuals, whole families, entire villages, and even small towns embraced Catholicism. Their official entry into the "true Church" usually took place during mass ceremonies performed by Ustashi priests, "watched" by armed units of Ustashi. Refusal, or even postponement, on the part of the prospective converts brought upon them immediate requisitioning of property, threats against themselves, their relatives, and their very lives.

Thousands embraced Catholicism in this manner. Following their "conversion," the new Catholics wound in a procession to the local Catholic Church, as a rule escorted by units of piously armed Ustashi, chanting about the happiness of having at last become the children of the true Church, and ending up with Te Deums and prayers for the Pope. As if this were not sufficient, the villages where Serbs had been re-christened had to send congratulatory telegrams to Stepinac. For the eager Archbishop had, as befitted a good shepherd, ordered that the news of any mass conversions performed in any parish throughout Croatia be sent directly to him. Telegrams bearing such happy tidings were printed in the Ustashi paper, *Nova Hrvatska*, as well as in Stepinac's own official Diocesan Journal, *Katolicki List*. In its issue of April 9, 1942, the former printed four such telegrams, all addressed to Stepinac. In these, the mass entries into the bosom of Mother Church were laconically and succinctly described. One, for example, read:

"2,300 persons, assembled in Slatinski Drenovac, from the villages of Drenovac, Pusina, Kraskovic, Prekorecan, Miljani and Gjuristic, accepted today the protection of the Roman Catholic Church and send their profound greetings to their Head."

Thirty per cent of Orthodox Serbs in the New Croatia were converted to Catholicism within a remarkably short period. The use of fear of losing property, or even life, however, was still not sufficient for most members of the Catholic Hierarchy engaged on this type of proselytization, and whenever resistance was encountered, Catholic clergymen ordered and,

in fact, themselves often carried out the execution of many Orthodox. When collective resistance was met, ruthless collective punishment was inflicted upon the reluctant Orthodox. More often than not that meant torture and even execution.

Instances of such priestly murderers are many. Suffice it to mention a few. For example, Father Dr. Dragutin Kamber, a sworn Ustashi, but also a Jesuit priest. Father Dragutin ordered the killing of about 300 Orthodox Serbs in Dobo, and the court-martial of 250 others, most of whom were shot. Or Father Dr. Branimir Zupanic, who had more than 400 men, women, and children killed in one village alone, Ragolje, and who was a personal friend of Ante Pavelic. During one of his sermons in the church of Gorica, Father Srecko Peric, of the Gorica monastery near Livno, advocated mass murders with the following words: "Kill all Serbs. First of all, kill my sister, who is married to a Serb, and then all Serbs. When you finish this work, come here to the Church and I will confess you and free you from sin." This resulted in a massacre, on August 10, 1941, during which over 5,600 Orthodox Serbs in the district of Livno alone lost their lives.

The chief ecclesiastic murderer, however, was neither a mere Catholic clergyman nor a fanatical Jesuit. He was no less than a member of the Order of meek St. Francis: Miroslav Filipovic, an Ustashi since long before the war, and a Franciscan monk. Father Filipovic killed a child with his own hands in the village of Drakulic, while addressing a battalion of Ustashi: "Ustashi," was his curt brotherly exhortation, "I re-Christen these degenerates in the name of God. You follow my example." One thousand five hundred Orthodox Serbs were then executed on one single day. Jasenovac, an Ustashi concentration camp which equalled Dachau in horror, not long afterwards received a new Commandant: Father Filipovic. In his new role, Filipovic, co-operating with Father Zvonko Brekalo, Zvonko Lipovac, and Father Culina, caused the deaths of 40,000 men, women, and children in the camp during the period of his administration.⁶

The losses inflicted by these frenzied attempts of the

Catholics to destroy the Orthodox Church were immense. The material damage amounted to 7 milliard pre-war gold dinars. Out of twenty-one Orthodox bishops in Yugoslavia, one was taken to internment in Italy, two were forcibly removed from their sees and sent to Serbia, one was imprisoned with Patriarch Gavrilo and then sent to Dachau concentration camp, two were beaten and sent to Serbia, where they died shortly afterwards, two died in internment camps, and five were murdered in cold blood.⁷ About 400 Orthodox priests were sent to concentration camps, while about 700 (one-quarter of the total number of Orthodox priests) were killed. One-quarter of monasteries and churches were completely destroyed, about half of the total number were damaged, an unknown number were transformed into Catholic churches or Catholic halls. Out of 189 churches in the Gornjo Karlovachka diocese, for instance, 175 were burned and destroyed.⁸

The greatest losses, however, were inflicted among the humble members of the Orthodox Church. In Pavelić's New Ustashi State, in fact, between April, 1941, and the spring of 1945, thanks to Ustashi units, Ustashi police, and concentration camps, at least 850,000 members of the Orthodox Church and citizens of Yugoslavia, including numerous Croats (plus 30,000 Jews and 40,000 Gypsies), perished thus.⁹ Hundreds of Catholic priests and Catholic friars contributed, either directly or indirectly, to this colossal massacre.

To say that these were the deeds of individuals suffering from religious mania, or that these same individuals had discarded the most elementary rules of humanity, acting on their own initiative after scorning the admonitions of their Church and rebelling against her authority, is untrue. The Ustashi massacres, all the atrocities committed by either Catholic officials, priests, or monks, fell within a coolly calculated scheme for the total elimination of the Orthodox masses, actively or passively resisting their absorption into the Catholic fold. Indeed, it was the premeditated policy of the Catholic Hierarchy, acting on behalf of its true inspirer, the Vatican.

CHAPTER XII

THE TRUE INSPIRER, PROMOTER, AND EXECUTOR OF THE RELIGIOUS MASSACRES: THE VATICAN

THE most ruthless promoters of bloodshed throughout the ages have invariably been religious and political fanaticisms. The history of man has proved this to have been true, not only in the past, but, more portentous still, now in the present. Ustashi Croatia is the most frightening instance of modern times. There the identification of Church with State, of civil with religious authority, of spiritual with military ruthlessness, was bound to produce individuals who committed barbarities unimagined even by themselves.

Cassocks and tonsures have never given moral strength to clergymen nor rendered them immune to human frailty, passion, or vice. The murdering Catholic priests in Croatia were the victims of primitive frenzy. As such, they should be judged more with pity than with execration. Can, however, the master minds in Zagreb and in Rome, calmly exploiting the blind emotionalism and even wickedness of their clerical subordinates, be acquitted from the condemnation which history has already passed on them? Their calculated promotion of the Ustashi terror cannot be either minimized, excused, or condoned. For the mass murders carried out by individuals apparelled in clerical garb truly were instigated from the archiepiscopal palaces of the Catholic Hierarchy. That Hierarchy knew, nay, it approved and tacitly encouraged the sanguinary task.

Not one single member of their clergy, while the Independent Kingdom of Croatia lasted, was ever called to account by them. Not a single priest was by them ever punished, suspended, or unfrocked. Archbishop Stepinac, or any Catholic Bishop, could have done that at any time, had he been willing, not only when dealing with the most flagrant crimes, but also with minor transgressions—e.g.,

clerical fomentation of racial and religious hatred by word of mouth, writing, or deeds.

A Catholic priest may not write in the Press without episcopal approval. Canon Law is very specific on this matter. It decrees this: "Any priest who writes articles in daily papers or periodicals without permission of his own Bishop contravenes Canon 1386 of the Code of Canon Law." Yet what happened? Clerical incitements to hate, to convert by force, and to massacre appeared in the ordinary Press without the Bishops uttering a single word of reprimand. They were even printed in the very ecclesiastical Press of the Catholic Hierarchy. Indeed, many bishops became the open advocates of forcible conversion, as proved by Mgr. Aksamovitch, Bishop of Djakovo, who sent the following proclamation to all Orthodox Serbs in his diocese:

"Up to now I have received into the fold of the Catholic Church several dozens of thousands of Orthodox. Follow the example of these brothers of yours, and send, without any more delay, your request for your prompt conversion to Catholicism. By being converted to the Catholic Church you will be left in peace in your homes . . . and you will have ensured the salvation and the immortality of your souls . . ."

Some priests, to their credit, protested openly, declaring that such instructions did not harmonize with the spirit of Christian teaching. Their bishops brought pressure upon them, to compel them to carry out the policy of forcible conversions. This was testified by none less than Bishop Aksamovic's chaplain, Dr. Djuka Maric, at a hearing before Yugoslav authorities:

"I and my friend and colleague, Stjepan Bogutovac," said the chaplain, "were forced by our Bishop, Aksamovic, to go as missionaries to the Orthodox towns of Paucje and Cenkovo and to perform there the rituals of re-Christening all the inhabitants within a week's time."

The result was that, in the Bishopric of Djakovo, under the personal leadership of Bishop Aksamovic, there took place one of the biggest mass-conversions of Orthodox in the whole of Croatia.

The responsibility of the head of the Catholic Hierarchy

is further demonstrated by the fact that he could have used disciplinary authority, in addition to having at his disposal canonical power. Stepinac, in fact, was not only the Chairman of the Bishops' Conference; he had supreme control over the writing of the entire Catholic Press as Chairman of Catholic Action. Had he been willing to do so, he could have silenced any member of his clergy preaching the extermination of non-Catholics. Further to that, Archbishop Stepinac was invested with civil power, which he could have used, being a fully fledged Member of Parliament. Such power he shared with other prelates, among them: Mgr. Aksamovic, Bishop of Djakovo; Father Irgolitch, of Farkasic; Father Ante Lonacir, of Senj; Father Stjepan Pavunitch, of Koprivnica; Father Juraj Mikan, of Ogulin; Father Matija Politch, of Bakar; Father Toma Severovitch, of Krizevci; Brother Boniface Sipitch, of Tucepa; Franjo Skrinjar, of Djelekovac, Stipe Vucetitch, of Ledenice.

With such authority Stepinac could easily control and direct all the Catholic clergy. Had he been met with open defiance, he could simply apply military sanctions. For Stepinac was not only the highest ecclesiastical authority in the land: he had been created Supreme Military Apostolic Vicar of the Ustashi Army at the beginning of 1942. All priests attached to the Ustashi units were directly under him, as military subordinates. And, as a rule, these were the ones who either incited the soldiers to commit crimes or committed them themselves.

That the Catholic Hierarchy were the veritable promoters of the campaign of forcible conversions is further demonstrated by the fact that forced membership of Catholicism was made legal by governmental decree on May 3, 1941, when the Ustashi Government published a "Law concerning the conversion from one religion to another." Additional measures on this matter followed. For instance, in June, 1941, the Ustashi Prime Minister set up (decree No. 11,689) an Office on Religious Affairs, in charge of "all matters pertaining to questions connected with the conversion of the members of the Eastern Orthodox Church." Did Stepinac or the Catholic Hierarchy protest at the decree? Far from

it; they whole-heartedly supported the law. In fact, they saw to it that the Department had at its head a priest, that same intimate friend of Pavelic whom we have already encountered, Father Dionizije Juricev. This office came into being following the very private audience which Pius XII accorded to Pavelic a month earlier. And perhaps of even greater significance is the fact that on June 30, 1941, the Minister of Justice and of Religions sent an official letter to all Catholic bishops, in which the Ustashi Government confirmed what had already been agreed with Archbishop Stepinac—namely, the pursuance of a policy of liquidation of all the most influential strata of the Orthodox population—this to be carried out through refusal to accept them into the Catholic Church. "It is the wish of the Government," said the circular, "that all the priests, teachers, and, in fact, all the intellectuals belonging to the Orthodox Church, in addition to businessmen, industrialists, and the rich peasants, must on no account be accepted into the Catholic Church. Only the poor Orthodox population must be converted."

The fanatical determination of the Catholic Hierarchy to destroy the Orthodox religion at its very roots is demonstrated by their cold-blooded attitude towards the surviving Orthodox children who, unlike their parents, had escaped extermination. All these children were placed in public homes directed by Catholic priests or Catholic sisters, under the auspices of *Caritas*, the Catholic organization run by the Hierarchy. In many cases they were put in the care of private Catholic families. What was the real objective of such extraordinary Catholic compassion? The implanting into their "lost souls" of "the true faith," as a prerequisite for their bodies being saved. Their religious assimilation was speedy, ruthless, and efficient. Officially converted to Catholicism, re-baptised with Catholic names, growing up in Catholic surroundings, these children, under continuous relentless Catholic pressure quickly lost all contact with their original ethnic and religious group. The inevitable result was that they were soon absorbed into the Catholic fold. Their assimilation was so thorough that even after Pavelic's collapse it became impossible to trace most of them, documents relating to their origin often having been wil-

fully destroyed. Fleeing Ustashi took a number of such children with them to their main country of refuge, the Argentine. Others were taken to Italy. The wholesale kidnapping of Orthodox children was a characteristic feature of the forcible conversion, through terror, of Orthodox adults.

The former Apostolic Administrator and Bishop of Krizevci, Dr. Simrak, like many of his episcopal colleagues, publicly promoted, discussed, and encouraged plans for the whole campaign, and published directives to his clergy in the official Bishopric News of Krizevci, No. 2, 1942. Part of the text reads as follows:

"Directive regarding the conversion of the members of the Eastern Orthodox Church in Slavonia, Srijem and Bosnia.

"Special offices and church committees must be created immediately for those to be converted. . . . Let every curate remember that these are historic days for our missions and we must under no circumstances let this opportunity pass. . . . Now we must show with our work what we have been talking about for centuries in theory. We have done very little until now because . . . we are afraid of complaints from the people. Every great work has someone opposing it. Our universal mission, the salvation of souls and the greatest glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, is involved in this issue. Our work is *legal* because it is in accord with *official Vatican policy* and with the directives of the saintly congregations of the Cardinals for the Eastern Church."¹

If these extraordinary directives had been issued by one single bishop, or even by several bishops, their significance would have incriminated the Catholic Church beyond excuse. But when it is considered that the Bishop of Krizevci, far from acting on his own, was officially following the instructions promulgated by his own very Primate, then the gravity of such instructions assumes a meaning transcending the deeds of a local Hierarchy and trespassing into fields affecting the most sacred principles of religious liberty of all men. The programme of forcible conversions was given canonic sanction after Stepinac had convened a Bishops' Conference in Zagreb on November 17, 1941—that is, the year before. From that date onward the entire Catholic

Hierarchy adopted a programme which was officially followed until the fall of Pavelic. Indeed, the programme which gave hierarchical sanction to the policy of forcible conversions was further strengthened by the actual setting up of a Committee of Three. The task of the holy triumvirate? To promote the policy of the forcible conversions, in conjunction with the Ustashi Minister of Justice and Religion. The names of the Members of the Committee need no comment: the Bishop of Senj, the Apostolic Administrator, Dr. Janko Simrak, and the Archbishop of Zagreb, Mgr. Stepinac.

Some of the revealing clauses of the decree read thus:

"The Council of Croatian Bishops, at a conference held in Zagreb on the 17th day of December, 1941, upon deliberations in regard to the conversion of Serbians of Orthodox faith to Roman Catholicism, promulgates the following decree:

"1. Concerning the vital question of the conversion of those of Serbian Orthodox faith into Roman Catholicism, the Catholic Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, according to divine right and church canons, retains sole and exclusive jurisdiction in issuing necessary prescriptions for said purpose, consequently, any action from any other but ecclesiastical authority is excluded.

"2. The Catholic Ecclesiastical Hierarchy has the exclusive right to nominate and appoint missionaries with the object of converting those of the Serbian Orthodox into the Catholic faith. Every missionary shall obtain permission for his spiritual work from the nearest local church authority . . .

"11. It is necessary that for conversions to be achieved, a *psychological basis* should be created among the Serbian Orthodox followers. With this object in view they should be guaranteed not only *civil rights*, but in particular they should be granted the right of *personal freedom* and also the right to *hold property*." ²

Thereupon the Conference of these holy men released a complementary resolution (No. 253). In this they explained in more detail how certain forcible conversions were to be carried out. Then a second committee, which was directly

under the Conference of the Catholic bishops, was set up, with the task of putting into practice the policy of forcible conversions. The list of its five members is significant: Dr. Franjo Hermann, Professor of the Theological Faculty of Zagreb; Dr. Augustin Juretitch, Adviser to the Conference of the Catholic Bishops; Dr. Janko Kalaj, Professor of Religious Education; Dr. Krunoslav Draganovitch, Professor of the Theological Faculty of Zagreb; and Mgr. Nikola Boritch, director of the Administration of the Archbishopric of Zagreb.

When examined without the frills and obscurities of their official phraseology, the various directives issued by these Hierarchical bodies turn out to be but faithful copies of similar instructions repeatedly given for centuries throughout the Christendom of the darkest Middle Ages. For that is what in reality they are. That a Catholic Hierarchy should have been permitted to re-issue them in the middle of the twentieth century is certainly one of the most sinister social phenomena of a civilization in swift decay.

The revival of a policy of forcible conversion assumes an even more portentous significance when one remembers that it occurred with the tacit approval of the Vatican. Had the Vatican disapproved, not a single priest could have taken part in the massacres or forcible conversions. A village priest can act only with the approval of minor Hierarchs who themselves cannot move without the permission of their Bishop, while the Bishop, in his turn, must act according to the instructions of his Archbishop; the Archbishop only on those of the Primate; the Primate on the direct instructions of the Vatican. The Vatican is the personal dominion of the Pope. The Pope being the central pivot of the vast Hierarchical machinery, it follows that the ultimate responsibility for all members of the clergy—or, to be more precise, for the collective action of any given national Hierarchy—rests with him. This cannot be otherwise. For policies of great import must be submitted to him before their promotion by all Hierarchies the world over, the Pope being their sole authority. If the responsibility for the monstrous persecutions rests with the head of the National Hierarchy—i.e. Stepinac—it has automatically to rest also with the Head of

the Universal Church, without whose consent the Catholic Hierarchy would not have dared to act—i.e. with Pius XII.

Pius XII could not plead ignorance of what was going on in Croatia by bringing forward the excuse of the obstacles of war. Communication between Rome and Croatia was as easy and as free as in peace-time. From the very beginning of hostilities the Nazi Ambassador at the Vatican was treated as of far greater importance than all the Allied diplomats. In 1940-2 the Vatican was on the most cordial terms with Hitler. Political and religious Ustashi leaders came and went between Rome and Zagreb as freely as did the Germans and Italians, the Ustashi State then being a satellite of Nazi Germany, and hence a province of the Nazi Empire. Moreover, the Pope knew what was happening in Croatia, not only through the Hierarchical administrative machinery, which kept him up to date on all Croatian events, but also through other reliable sources. They were:

(a) The Papal Legate. Pius XII, it should never be forgotten, had a personal representative in Croatia, whose task was to implement Vatican policy and co-ordinate it with that of Pavelic, as well as reporting on religious and political matters to the Pope himself. The Papal Legate to Croatia was Mgr. Marcone, who openly blessed the Ustashi, publicly gave the Fascist salute, and encouraged Catholics (e.g. when he went to Mostar) to be "faithful to the Holy See, which had helped that same people for centuries against *Eastern barbarism*"—that is to say, against the Orthodox Church and the Serbs. Thus, the Pope's official representative openly instigated religious persecution, as well as praying for victory "under the leadership of the Head of the State, Pavelic," against the Yugoslav National Liberation Army in 1944-5.

(b) Cardinal Tiseran, head of the Holy Congregation of Eastern Churches. This congregation's specific task was to deal with Eastern Churches. Cardinal Tiseran received detailed reports of every forcible conversion and massacre in Croatia. Between April and June, 1941, over 100,000 Orthodox Serbs were massacred; yet Cardinal Tiseran, on July 17, 1941, had the audacity to declare that Archbishop Stepinac would now do a great work for the development of Catholicism in "the Independent State of Croatia . . .

where there are such great hopes for the conversion of those who are not of the true faith."

(c) Ante Pavelic, who, by his representative to the Vatican, through whom Pius XII sent "special blessing to the Leader (Pavelic)," forwarded regular reports, at times straight from the Minister of Religions, about the "rapid" progress of the Catholicization of the New Croatia.

(d) Last but not least, Archbishop Stepinac himself, who in person visited Pius XII twice, and who supplied His Holiness with figures of the forcible conversions. In an official document, dated as late as May 8, 1944, His Eminence Archbishop Stepinac, head of the Catholic Hierarchy, in fact, informed the Holy Father that to date "244,000 Orthodox Serbs" had been "converted to the Church of God."

While Stepinac and Pius gave ever more frequent thanks to a merciful Catholic God for the increasing number of forcible conversions, protesting voices began to be heard with mounting insistence within and without Croatia.

The sneers of those who at first had regarded the news as a crude form of anti-Catholic propaganda, as reliable information began to leak out, ceased, and gave way, first to astonishment and then to horror. Appeals were made to Stepinac, the Pope and the Allies from all over Europe. Not only from Serbs, who had every reason for letting the world know, but also from Catholics, who could not accept such a bloody degradation of their religion. Some lodged horrified protests with Archbishop Stepinac, and indeed, direct with the Vatican. Perhaps one of the most outstanding was that written by Prvislav Grizogono.

Grizogono was a Minister of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, a Croat, and a devout Catholic. Yet nothing could more eloquently indict his Church than his letter, whose words were most carefully considered and scrupulously weighed:

"Your Grace:

"I write this to you as man to man, as a Christian to a Christian.

"Since the first day of the Independent Croatian State the Serbs have been massacred (in Gospich, Gudovac, Bos, Krajina, etc.) and this massacring has continued to this day."

He follows with a detailed enumeration of some of the crimes perpetrated. After which he concludes:

"Why do I write this to you? Here is why: In all these unprecedented crimes, worse than pagan, our Catholic Church has also participated in two ways. First, a large number of priests, clerics, friars and organized Catholic youth actively participated in all these crimes, but more terrible even Catholic priests became camp and group commanders, and as such ordered or tolerated the horrible tortures, murders and massacres of a baptized people. None of this could have been done without the permission of their Bishops, and if it was done, they should have been brought to the Ecclesiastical Court and unfrocked. Since this did not happen, then ostensibly the Bishops gave their consent by acquiescence at least.

"The Catholic Church has used all means to Catholicize forcibly the remaining Serbs. . . . The province of Srem is covered with the leaflets of Bishop Aksamovitch, printed in his own printing shop at Djakovo. He calls upon the Serbs, through these leaflets, to save their lives and property, recommending the Catholic faith to them.

"What will happen to us Croats if the impression is formed that we participated in all these crimes to the finish?

"Again it is the duty of the Church to raise its voice; first because it is a Church of Christ; second because it is powerful.

"I write to you this, about such terrible crimes, to save my soul, and I leave it to you to find a way to save yours.

Signed, Prvislav Grizogono,

former Minister of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

"At Zemun, February 8, 1942."

Not content with that, Dr. Grizogono despatched another letter to the Catholic Archbishop of Belgrade, Dr. Ujchich, who seemed sympathetic to his request. In it the Catholic former Minister of Yugoslavia begged the Archbishop to ask the Pope to order the Catholic Hierarchy to stop the mounting Ustashi terror by the prompt enforcement of ecclesiastical discipline and, if necessary, the use of papal authority.

Did the Archbishop of Belgrade state that the persecutions were pure fabrications or, at least, were grossly exaggerated? The Archbishop denied nothing. In fact, by his reply he

confirmed their authenticity. Indeed, he disclosed that he was fully conversant with what was then happening. Here is what he wrote to Dr. Grizogono :

"I thank you for your letter. The information about the massacres we have already received from many different sources. *I have forwarded everything to the Vatican*, and I believe that everything possible will be done." ³

The outcries of the civilized world echoed as vainly in the halls of the Catholic Hierarchy as in those of the Vatican. The saintly Pope and the worthy Archbishop were mute. Their silence cost the lives of 850,000 men, women, and children, the bloodiest religious massacre of the century.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum—"Such evil deeds could religion inspire."

CHAPTER XIII

CATHOLICISM, ATOMIC POWER, AND CIVILIZATION

As in the darkest Middle Ages, so also now the Catholic Church firmly believes that the ruthless brandishing of the Catholic sword is the surest way of saving the souls of men. This, not so much to confer on them eternal bliss, as to further the Church militant—that is, her expanding dominion on earth. Archbishop Stepinac and Pope Pius XII, therefore, let the terror in sealed Croatia take its course to the very end. Indeed, far from ever attempting to curtail it, they kept it alive, until the Kingdom tumbled with the fall of Fascism.

And yet before the echoes of the dictators ceased to be heard the Vatican suddenly appeared by the side of the victors, in a stealthy attempt to save moribund Fascism wherever it could.

Following consultations with Rome, Archbishop Stepinac and Ante Pavelic set in motion a joint plan to prevent their model State from crumbling as Fascist Europe was doing all around them. This consisted of:

(a) preventing the Yugoslav Government from scattering the Ustashi armies ;

(b) persuading the Allies to occupy Yugoslavia, so as to prevent the Central Government from taking over the Independent Catholic State of Croatia.

The two set out with desperate determination to implement their new policy, sustained by the belief that the Vatican would use its influence among the big Powers to save them. While waiting, however, they began to reorganize the Ustashi armies, with the specific objectives of (a) preventing the collapse of Ustashi Croatia, and (b) of resisting and possibly destroying the new Central Yugoslav Government.

To the latter, such stubborn hostility was of the utmost

seriousness, as at that period it was busily engaged in cleansing the country of resisting pockets of Nazi troops. The fight it had simultaneously to maintain against the Ustashi bands, therefore, put a considerable additional strain on the new Central Government. This was rendered even graver by the fact that in the international sphere Yugoslavia was considered a pawn for the already quarrelling victorious great Powers, each of which was ready to negotiate with anyone, in or outside that country, to advance its own projects.

Stepinac and Pavelic did all they could to see that Yugoslavia might be occupied by the "right" Allies—that is to say, by those willing to strike a deal with the Vatican for continued "independence" of Croatia. The true nature of their exertions can best be gauged if it is remembered that since 1941 Yugoslavia had been one of the Allies herself.

Stepinac and Pavelic approached the Supreme Allied Command for the Mediterranean, and duly submitted a memorandum, openly outlining their policy: indeed, asking specifically for a prompt Allied occupation of the whole country. Anglo-American armies should be despatched with speed, they said. Ustashi troops would welcome them, and more would join them. The "right" Allies must not lose another day. Civil war had broken out all over Yugoslavia. They must intervene.

Having invoked the guns of the "right" Allies, the good Archbishop set out to use the spiritual guns of the Church. On March 24, 1945, he summoned his own bishops to a Conference. Result: the blatant use of the spiritual authority of the Church for the promotion of political and military designs. Stepinac, backed by most of the bishops, issued a pastoral letter. After duly praising Ante Pavelic, their lordships attacked the Yugoslav National Liberation movement with all the pious venom of which they were capable. Thereupon they ordered all Croats to help the Ustashi bands to fight the Yugoslav troops. Only thus they thought would Ustashi Croatia survive.

As the situation worsened it became necessary to take another step. Following hasty consultations with the Vatican shortly before the total disintegration, Ante Pavelic asked a trusted friend to take hold of the reins of

Ustashi Government. His name? Archbishop Stepinac.¹ It was a shrewd move. A last desperate attempt to unite the Ustashi State into a truly compact unit. Stepinac—or, rather, the Vatican, which had inspired it—had fancied that, once the spiritual, political, and military forces of the State were centralized in the head of the Catholic Hierarchy, the Archbishop's authority would delay the disintegration of the State—indeed, by strengthening its fabric, might even prevent its collapse, and thus enable Vatican diplomacy in the meantime to exert its growing pressure on certain Allies, until these consented to save the Ustashi State from obliteration.

The move neither stopped the swiftly advancing Yugoslav Army nor saved from total collapse the fast-tumbling European Fascism. The Ustashi State had been doomed long before Stepinac tried to save it. In a losing battle to prevent its inevitable fate, Pavelic and his bloody bands, months before, had unloosed such a reign of terror as almost to surpass the previous ferocity. People were hanged, executed, or liquidated as hostages on the slightest suspicion.

To take the city of Zagreb and its immediate environs, in the course of only seven months (from August, 1944, to February, 1945) 379 hostages were publicly hanged. On August 7, 1944, between the villages of Precec and Ostrono, ten persons were hanged; on August 26, at Jablanac, near Zapresic, thirty-six persons; on September 30, on the railway between the stations of Pusca Bistra and Luka, ten persons; on October 4, at St. Ivan, twenty-nine persons; on October 5, again at Zapresic, five persons; on October 6, at Cucerje, twenty persons; on October 9, at Velika Gorica, thirteen persons; on October 28, at Djurinac, twenty persons; on the same day at Sveta Nedjelja, near Samobor, eighteen persons; on December 1, at Brezovica, ten persons; on December 20, at Odra, thirteen persons; on December 28, at Krusljevo Selo, fifty persons; on January 4, 1945, at Zitnjak, twenty-five persons; on January 25, at Konscina, forty persons; on February 3, again at Zitnjak, ten persons; on February 10, at Remetinac, thirty persons; on February 13, at Vrapce, twenty persons; on February 22, again at Vrapce, another twenty persons.

Notwithstanding all this, the end approached fast.

Within a few days, Zagreb, the Croatian capital, was liberated. The Ustashi tried to save what they could. At the end of April, 1945, Pavelic, with the full consent of Stepinac, ordered the burial, in the Franciscan monastery in Zagreb Cathedral city, the Kaptol, of thirty-six chests of plundered gold and valuables—rings, jewellery, gold watches, gold dentures, gold fillings which had been wrenched from the jaws of victims whom the Ustashi had massacred—and about two truck-loads of silver. Then, when the collapse was complete, having entrusted to the care of Stepinac himself their most important documents,² the Ustashi ran for their lives. Some were executed. Many escaped. Pavelic fled to Austria, where he was made a prisoner by the American forces near Salzburg. While preparations for his official trial were well on their way, a "mysterious intervention" stopped the proceedings. Why! Pavelic was released unconditionally. Pius XII, through Stepinac and the Archbishop of Salzburg, had seen to it that his protégé did not suffer the fate of many other war criminals who were hanged. Pavelic, rendered immune by the powerful papal protection, travelled to Italy and found it in the Vatican City, where he waited for easier times.

After a while, to avoid scandal, the Pope, now a pillar of the victorious democracies, required Pavelic to quit Rome. Pavelic went from one monastery to another in monkish disguise under various aliases, Father Benares, or Father Gomez.

Meanwhile, in Croatia—Stepinac, in accord with the Holy Father, continued his ominous preparations for war. The Ustashi, instead of disbanding, became guerrillas. They were, as in olden times, to fight in the hills and woods of "occupied Croatia." Their new enemy: the Central Government of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, which had replaced the Yugoslav kingdom. Their new terrorist activities were to be cloaked again in innocent-sounding religious organizations. The old name of "The Crusaders" was adopted. After clandestinely meeting with the Ustashi Chief of Police in September, 1945, Stepinac summoned another Bishops' Conference in Zagreb. Once more their Graces, claiming to be men of peace, incited to war. In a

pastoral letter they asked the people in so many unctuous words to rise and overthrow the Government.

Before such battle orders were issued, a flag, a symbol of the great holy army of the Ustashi, was consecrated to the Ustashi Crusaders' forces. Where did the ceremony take place? In Stepinac's chapel. On November 8, 1945, the good Archbishop received an agent who brought from Salzburg the "Pledge of Ustashi intellectuals"—to fight the Yugoslav Government till the end "for the liberation of the Croatian people."

The pledges of the surviving Ustashi, the activities of Archbishop Stepinac, were no shadow of resistance, but concrete and real. Stepinac employed dangerous, ruthless individuals. To cite only one, the former Ustashi Chief of Police. This individual launched a programme of sabotage and of assassination of the officials of the New Yugoslav Republic, with the Archbishop's approval. Stepinac furthermore established contact with the scattered armed bands of the Ustashi, directing priests and monks to act as liaison with them. These holy men travelled all over the country, keeping the illegal Crusader groups in communication with one another. They zealously reported their position, strength, and equipment to Stepinac in Zagreb. The Archiepiscopal Headquarters saw to it that such reports reached the Vatican, which, as a genuine champion of all democracies, forwarded them to the U.S.A.³

The chain—Ustashi, Stepinac, Vatican, U.S.A.—was not merely a clandestine news agency. It was something more: a bait to induce certain Allied forces to promote a timely military intervention against Yugoslavia. For, indeed, Stepinac and his illegal bands based their hope of ultimate success upon that.

The Vatican, far from counselling moderation, encouraged the Ustashi resistance, and added continual fuel to their burning hopes with repeated assurances of forthcoming military intervention. The Allies would come to their help. They must hold on, as the international situation was bound to change in their favour. The Western Powers were going to turn against their recent ally, Soviet Russia. A war of liberation was in preparation. Once that had begun, Yugo-

slavia would be wiped out, and Ustashi Croatia would spring again to the fore. The Ustashi guerrillas talked of nothing else. Stepinac saw to it that their expectations were maintained at the highest level, lest their enthusiasm change to despair, and thus cause the total collapse of organized military resistance.

To this effect, the prestige and authority of religion were once more unscrupulously employed. "The Fathers"—that is, the various Catholic padres whom the Archbishopric of Zagreb had duly attached to the illegal terroristic Ustashi bands—went from hide-out to hide-out, encouraging the impatient Ustashi troops to endure a little longer. The British and Americans were just coming. But they must be patient, as, naturally, to plan a good military expedition took time. The assurances of the Catholic padres were repeated day in and day out, until they became a refrain for the Ustashi troops, expecting "the day" as, simultaneously, their day of deliverance and the new birthday of a more glorious Ustashi Croatia. This was not merely the conviction of the underground Ustashi formations or that of the priests. It was that of Stepinac himself, sure that once the Allies intervened, the Ustashi would be given help by the peasants, who "one day will rise."⁴

The Archbishop, however, was not content only with wiping out Yugoslavia as a political unit in order to ensure the resurgence of a new Catholic Croatia. He was allured by visions of superb grandeur—nothing less than that an Allied intervention would be a stepping-stone leading them to Belgrade and, then, to Moscow. The issue, according to conservative forecasting, rested on conventional military weapons. Stepinac, however, although a Catholic Archbishop, was a man of progressive ideas. He believed in the power of scientific achievements, such as the recently discovered atomic energy. The atom bombs dropped without a warning on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had in a few seconds blotted out of existence 100,000 men, women, and children. Catholic Providence had not given the Christian West atomic bombs for nothing. It was the duty of the Western Allies to use them. Stepinac was a logical man. If he had used the Ustashi to impose Catholicism upon the Serb

Orthodox, it was perfectly natural for him to look "upon the West to use its atomic power to impose Western civilization on Moscow and Belgrade, *before it is too late.*"⁴

The ruthlessness of such advocacy was typically Catholic. Christianity (that is, Catholicism) could be—indeed, had to be—imposed upon those rejecting Christian civilization, and, failing persuasion, this must be done by force. Such Catholic reasoning had made Ustashi Croatia possible; the same Catholic reasoning now had begun looking on wider horizons, to make a new Ustashi regime of a whole Continent.

Was that the personal whim of Archbishop Stepinac?

It was the basic Catholic policy emanating directly from the Vatican. This was proved only three years later (1949), when another pillar of the Catholic Church—i.e. Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary—having planned to overthrow the Hungarian Government, reckoned on the military intervention of the "right" kind of Allies. Such intervention would have meant general war, and hence the use of atomic bombs. Cardinal Mindszenty had acted on the assumption that the overthrow of the Hungarian Government, with the consequent "restoration of the Hungarian Catholic Monarchy of Hapsburg in its place, could be achieved with help from abroad . . . in case a new world war created such a situation," to quote his own words.⁵ "I regarded it (the outbreak of the third world war) as a basis," said the Cardinal. Mindszenty could well think and act in this fashion, in the comforting knowledge that behind him stood the Vatican, bent upon furthering its vast political schemes, on the assumption of a third world conflict. Vatican political post-war designs had precisely that "as a basis."

Are these speculations? Actions speak louder than words. Pius XII at this same period was not idle. He held talks with prominent military leaders of the "right" Allies upon whom first Stepinac and then Mindszenty had counted so much. British and, above all, American generals came and went in endless procession to and from His Holiness. To give one typical example. On one single day in June, 1949, Pius XII received five U.S.A. generals in successive audiences: General Mark Clark, war-time Commander of the U.S. Fifth Army in Italy, and subsequently Commander in the

Korean war; Lieut.-General J. Cannon, Commanding General of the U.S. Air Force in Europe; Major-General Robert Douglass, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Armed Forces in Europe; Major-General Maxwell Taylor, Deputy Commander, European Command; and Lieut.-General Geoffrey Keyes, Commanding General of the U.S. forces in Austria.⁶ All these went to see, not the self-styled papal Prince of Peace; they went to talk with the Pope, like them, a man of war.⁷

With the Vatican as a busy centre of vast war designs, it was inevitable that some of its dignitaries in various countries should become its political reflections or spokesmen. Archbishops and Cardinals consequently spoke and acted on the assumption of war, and hence the use of atomic bombs. The Vatican, which within an astonishingly brief period had developed the most intimate relations with certain malign forces in the U.S.A., was not merely indulging in wishful thinking when it passed on such information to its emissaries abroad. It informed them of what was going on behind the scenes in certain quarters. That this was a most sinister, incredible reality was demonstrated to a stunned world the following year.

On August 27, 1950, Mr. Francis Matthews, during a speech in Boston, called upon the United States to become "*the first aggressor for peace.*"⁸ In plain words, to launch a third world conflict. That is, to initiate an atomic war. Mr. Francis Matthews was neither a crank nor an irresponsible citizen. He was a powerful man in the American Government: none other than the Secretary of the American Navy. But Mr. Matthews was also something which at this juncture was perhaps even more ominous. He was a fanatical Catholic, honoured many times for his services to Catholic welfare work; and, more than that, Mr. Matthews had been the head of the most villainous Catholic organization in the whole of the U.S.A.—that is, the Knights of Columbus. And, as if that were not sufficient, he was nothing less than a *secret Papal Chamberlain* of Pope Pius XII.

With individuals so highly placed, the Vatican could not help being so well-informed of what was brewing in certain quarters preparing to be the "first aggressors for peace." The information it passed to the Servants of the Church,

therefore, moulded the policies of bishops and Cardinals, such as Stepinac and Mindszenty, playing the complicated Vatican game on the chess-board of post-war Europe. The declarations of secret Papal Chamberlains, of Cardinals, and of Archbishops, consequently, far from being the personal opinions of individuals, were the expression of hopes and policies entertained at the source which, as early as 1946, had already inspired all the main schemes and beliefs of Stepinac—namely, the Vatican.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH PREPARES FOR THE FUTURE

It is the duty of any State, independently of its religious or ideological nature, to defend itself when threatened by domestic or external enemies. The Central Government of Yugoslavia, aware of Archbishop Stepinac's activities, past and present, could not continue to watch them indefinitely and aloof. Sooner or later, it had to consider steps to end them.

If the Government had had to deal with a simple political or military leader, the solution would have been ready at hand. But here the issue was complicated by the fact that a political leader was also the head of the Catholic Hierarchy. His arrest would raise complex religious repercussions at Rome, and therefore practically throughout the Western world.

The Yugoslav Government decided to solve the problem tactfully, by removing Stepinac, without raising the religious hornet's nest issue. To that end, it approached Pius XII, demanding the Archbishop's withdrawal from Zagreb. The Vatican, true to its reputation as a master of Sibylline moves, in October, 1945, charged an American in Yugoslavia, Bishop J. P. Hurley, of Florida, at that time acting as the Vatican Apostolic Nuncio there, to investigate the case and report on it direct to the Pope.

Bishop Hurley made extensive inquiries and wrote a comprehensive memorandum, which was speedily sent to Pius XII. Pius XII read it, mused upon it, and then decided to proceed as already planned with regard to Stepinac. Hurley's findings were promptly pigeon-holed, and never heard of again.

The Yugoslav Government waited. As the head of the Government himself testified, "waited four months without receiving any reply."¹

The Vatican was silent because Pius XII planned a war of his own, in which Stepinac was to play a very prominent role. It was the beginning of a psychological papal cold war. In this war religion would be used as the main instrument, directed at stirring up emotional hatred for political ends. Stepinac had to be sacrificed to the requirements of Catholic world diplomacy.² Having embarked on this course, the Vatican first contacted, not the waiting Yugoslav Government, but Archbishop Stepinac, whom it ordered to carry on.

When the War Crimes Commission, which, meanwhile, was collecting documentation on war criminals, produced its evidence concerning the head of the Catholic Hierarchy, and presented it to the Yugoslav Government, the latter, after further vain attempts with the Vatican, decided to act. On September 18, 1946, Archbishop Stepinac was arrested. The utmost care was taken that the trial should be fair, in view of the fact that it was certain to raise all kinds of religious and political complications within and outside Yugoslavia. Although only about one-third of the Yugoslav population is Catholic, the Government saw to it that *all* the officials at the trial were Croatian Catholics. The world Press was invited to attend, which it did. On October 11, 1946, after a ten days' hearing, the Court—composed, it should be remembered, of Catholics—sentenced Archbishop Stepinac to sixteen years imprisonment.

The Vatican uttered a cry of horror, instantly amplified a thousandfold by the Catholic Hierarchies, Catholic agencies, and Catholic Press the world over. Pope Pius XII ordered the excommunication of all those who had taken part in the trial, from Tito himself down to the last official connected in any way with Stepinac's indictment. All received a solemn Catholic guarantee of eternal damnation in genuine Catholic brimstone and inextinguishable infernal fire. The thing was made even more fearsome by a papal afterthought, which promised the personal attention of Lucifer himself on all those so excommunicated. The Prince of Devils

would torture all the un-Christian persecutors of the Archbishop during æons without end. Papal authority had decreed so. Amen.

Had such authority been exercised only in hell, it would have worried fewer Christians than is generally believed. Infernal candidates must first emigrate to the next world, and no case has as yet been authenticated of anybody dying because of the scorching effect of the spiritual papal bolts. With millions of the living, however, this same papal authority is neither problematic nor fictitious. It is real, widespread, and dangerous. It can tap vast sources of power at will, whether to help its friends and allies or to dismay its enemies. Last but not least, it can engender the darkest currents of religious and political emotionalism, to control and use the deceived masses of Catholics and non-Catholics alike to further its own interests. The case of Stepinac once more strikingly demonstrated this.

The Pope set in motion the vast machinery of Catholic propaganda, which in no time flooded the world with such mountainous distortions and such plain dishonesty as to shame the most deceitful of all the devils in hell. Overnight Stepinac, the authoritarian leader, the political plotter, the politician, the promoter of the forcible conversions, the tolerator and indirect instigator of the Ustashi massacres, was made to appear as Stepinac the defender of true democracy, the most holy Archbishop, the courageous champion of religious freedom, the persecuted and the martyr. Millions accepted the Catholic version. The result was that soon large sections of the Western world who until then had not even bothered with the whole thing hailed Stepinac as the pitiful victim of anti-Christian barbarism.

The lay Press followed suit, exalting Stepinac as the champion of Christianity fighting the powers of darkness. Religious and political leaders joined in the chorus. Foreign Offices, heads of States, and, indeed, whole Governments of Catholic and non-Catholic lands sent official protests against "such unheard-of religious persecution." Questions were heatedly asked in the British House of Commons, in the French, Italian, and Belgian Chambers of Deputies, in the American House of Representatives and Senate. In the U.S.A.

President Truman was subjected to a tremendous pressure to force him to intervene on behalf of the "martyred Stepinac." A world-wide movement was set up to induce U.N.O. to come to the rescue of a man who had defended all the religious and civil liberties for which the United Nations was said to stand.

The emotional mass distortion engineered by the master minds at the Vatican soon began to yield its poisonous harvest, not so much in the religious realm as where it was potentially a thousandfold more dangerous: that is, in the political field.

At this period, it must be remembered, the cold war was still in its earliest stage. The blind emotionalism engendered by the trial and its aftermath was used to widen the growing gap between the Russian-dominated Communist and the American-led capitalist worlds.

Soviet Russia slowed down its demobilization and kept a large standing land army on a war footing. The U.S.A. pushed ahead its war preparations to such an extent that, after the Stepinac trial had taken place, it had already spent the colossal sum of almost one billion dollars on stock-piling.³ By 1947 the military forces of the world numbered 19 million, and were maintained at an annual cost of 27,000 million dollars. This, less than two years after the fall of Hitler. From then onward military expenditure rocketed to astronomical figures. By the time that Yugoslavia—who, meanwhile, owing to ideological developments, had leaned towards the West—partially set Archbishop Stepinac free (winter 1951-2) and Stepinac, from Archbishop, became a Cardinal (1953), the world had been split asunder.⁴

The American factories were made to hum, while the American Air Force, Army, and Navy were posted throughout the world in main strategic places, ready to strike. Colossal expenditures for war were voted by the American Administration—e.g. 129,000 million dollars, voted by Congress within less than two years (1950-2) for military armaments and construction.⁵ By early 1953 in Europe alone the U.S.A. had already built more than a hundred airfields, many specially equipped for atomic operations, as defensive-offensive bases against Russia.⁶

In Communist Russia preparations of the same magnitude as a defensive-offensive war policy were carried out, with impetus to match their Western counterparts. Within a few brief years from the end of the Second World War billions of roubles were appropriated for military purposes. In no time, while Soviet Russia became the arsenal of the East, the U.S.A. became the arsenal of the West, and its most powerful political military leader.

The nations of the world, although not yet out of the second world massacre, made ready for the oncoming third. Politicians, generals, heads of governments, spoke of atomic wars. Armies reassembled, ready to march. A bloody rehearsal of another global slaughter, in imitation of the Spanish Civil War of 1936-9, where the ideologically hostile armies rehearsed a small conflict to be ready for a big one, was staged in Korea in the summer of 1950.

A gigantic armaments race undermined the economy of whole nations, thus rendering war between the two mighty Eastern and Western blocs not so much probable as inevitable.

While the increasingly powerful militaries asked for ever more colossal appropriations, from Vatican Hill came unctuous slogans for peace mingled with veiled threats, invocations to religion, and sanctimonious condemnations of the "atheistic enemies of Christianity."

In cynical betrayal of the masses of honest, humble believers, the Vatican was plotting feverishly in the political-diplomatic fields to further its designs. Then one day, above all this, voices were heard—the official voices of the reorganized bands of Ustashi, calling to their members not to scatter, as the hour when they, the Catholic Ustashi of Croatia, would fight side by side with the democratic defenders of Western civilization was fast approaching. The glorious battalions of the Ustashi had to make ready. But while they were willing to fight for world liberty, they had to prepare to do so only in the name of Catholic Croatia, in Catholic units, and under the Croatian flag. No Ustashi, therefore, was permitted to join a foreign army. The appeal of the resuscitated terrorist bands—with their headquarters in the U.S.A.—ran thus :

"Headquarters of the V. assembly of Croatian Armed Forces, having jurisdiction over all subjects of the Croatian Armed Forces (Hr or Sn) living on the territory of the European States.

"It has been learned that some persons, unauthorized, are endeavouring to persuade individuals to enlist in foreign armies. By the order of the Supreme Command of all Croatian Armed Forces, all subjects living in any European State be notified that no individual person is authorized for such activity, nor is it permitted enlisting in foreign armies in any capacity, without a special authorized permit. The Supreme Command of all the Croatian Armed forces will call its forces to arm against Bolshevism when the time arrives to fight side by side with other anti-Communistic nations, under our own flag and within our Croatian army formations.

Headquarters V. Assembly,
General Drinyanin,
August, 1950." ⁷

These were noble words. The words of an idealist longing for liberty to prevail on earth. Many acclaimed the new defenders of freedom. In certain quarters, however, they knew better. For General Drinyanin was the alias of former Chief Commandant of all the terrible Catholic concentration camps of Croatia, the leader of the bloody "Ustashi Defence" formations responsible for the massacre of 200,000 prisoners in the camps of Yasenovatz, the "protector" of all the jack-booted or soutaned monsters who, a few short years before, had been engaged in the forcible conversions to Catholicism, under the ægis of Stepinac, now Cardinal.

While the Ustashi, protected in the Western Hemisphere, were sounding a new trumpet-call from the north, their leader, Ante Pavelic, was busy in the south on the same type of activity on which he had been engaged prior to the Second World War. For Pavelic had in 1948, thanks again to Vatican help, managed to leave Europe. Supplied with false documents given in Rome on an international Red Cross passport, he went to another Catholic country harbouring Nazi leaders: ⁸ the Argentine.⁹

The false passport which had brought him to safety was furnished by another Catholic priest, a former Ustashi,

Father Draganovic, residing in Rome. Priest Draganovic, to make sure that the former Chief should reach the Argentine safely, accompanied him personally as far as Buenos Aires. There he briefed certain high Argentine Hierarchs, after which he duly returned to Rome (end of 1949). Priest Draganovic had acted not only as a zealous Catholic, as a priest and as an Ustashi, but also as the representative of the Vatican, which was concerned with the future of a man, Ante Pavelic, and of an idea, ruthless Ustashi-ism, both of which, because they had succeeded in establishing a model Catholic State once, might succeed in re-establishing it in a future which was, perhaps, not far ahead.

Pavelic at once became active. Most of his meetings were held in Catholic parish halls in Buenos Aires. Catholic priests and friars participated in them—e.g. at the meeting held on February 5, 1951, five Catholic friars attended.¹⁰ The majority of these meetings and similar activities were organized by priests, prominent among them the Ustashi Catholic Padre, the Rev. Mato Luketa.¹¹

Pavelic took to the Argentine three things:

(a) Papal blessing, as good an introduction to the Argentine Hierarchy, and hence to the Government, as any;

(b) loot from Croatia;¹²

(c) the Ustashi programme.

While some of his lieutenants kept Ustashi-ism alive in the U.S.A. and in Europe, Pavelic set about co-ordinating it in the Argentine. Meetings were held, papers were published, Ustashi abroad were organized. In 1949 Pavelic established the "Hrvatska Državotvorna Stranka." In that same year he held six large meetings of the Ustashi, most of them in parish halls such as the Catholic Croat Parish Hall on Avenida Belgrano. Pavelic counselled that "all honest Croats in exile should belong" to his movement. Thereupon he instructed them all not to take Argentine nationality, so that they would be able to leave the country without any hindrance.

Pavelic talked of war and of blood. The titles of his articles told their tale: "The Ideological War" (La Guerra

Ideologica),¹³ and "The Call of Blood," the latter being an introduction to the proclamation of the resurrected Party. The basis of Pavelic's new policy was war. Like another pillar of political Catholicism before him—i.e. Cardinal Mindszenty—so also Pavelic hoped for the outbreak of the Third World War. "War will soon break out," he foretold on May 13, 1949, "and then the liberation of Croatia will come."

The next year, as we have already seen, the United States Secretary of the Navy, the secret Chamberlain of the Pope, shocked the world by openly asking the U.S.A. to start a "preventive atomic war" against Russia, in order to "liberate" the people of the earth.

The Republican platform adopted in Chicago (July, 1952), after demanding an end to "the negative, futile and immoral policy of containment, which abandons countless human beings to a despotism and godless terrorism,"¹⁴ asked for a policy directed at the specific promotion of sabotage, raising of resistance movements, industrial disturbances, and, last but not least, *the establishment of émigré Governments.*

The American people went to the polls (November 4, 1952) and sent to power the Republican Party. With few exceptions unbounded rejoicing greeted the Republican victory throughout the Catholic world. The Pope himself, on hearing that General Eisenhower had been elected President, hastened to send by cable his "divine blessing upon yourself and your administration."¹⁵ Pavelic, in the Argentine, asked all the Ustashi to hail the Republican triumph. Ustashi priests gave special thanksgivings in South and North America, as well as in Europe. Te Deums were sung. Divine Providence was again coming to the rescue. It had sent into power an American Government which was determined to create "political task forces" to free "captive" countries. Indeed, to establish "émigré governments." Were not the reorganized Ustashi a "political task force"? Was not Catholic Croatia a "captive" country? Nobody could deny that Pavelic's new Ustashi Government was an "émigré government."

For truly, Pavelic had set up a new Ustashi Government. The New Ustashi Government had in fact been officially estab-

lished by him in 1951, in the Argentine. Its religious and political programme had not changed an iota from that of the old Ustashi dictatorship.

With a Republican Administration in the White House, with a General determined on a strong foreign policy as President, with a Soviet Russia preparing ruthless counter-measures, the world continued to move faster and faster towards catastrophe. Fanatical groups prepared and waited for "the day." That is, for the outbreak of a third world war, when the establishment of "*émigré* governments" would take place, among them the New Government of Croatia, ruled by the Ustashi and the Church.

Ante Pavelic in South America, General Drinyanin in the U.S.A., Father Draganovic in Rome, like hundreds of Catholic priests, friars, and laymen everywhere, had begun once more, as before the Second World War, to pray and work for World War III, so that they might be enabled again to bring "freedom"—namely, to unloose their reign of terror upon a newly devastated Croatia.

To such depths can the ideal of Liberty be made to sink.

CHAPTER XV

THE SHAPE OF CATHOLIC TERROR TO COME

MORE than a symbol, Croatia is a warning that the terror let loose within a small Balkan province was not an exceptional example of Catholic power in action, but the rehearsal, on a miniature scale, of Catholic tyranny ready to turn the whole of Europe into the gigantic Ustashi-ism of the future. The preparatory steps for such a sinister design have already been taken behind a screen of ideological crusades, with the most alarming results.¹

To further its inroads, Catholicism does not always come forward openly championing its own cause. Very often, as in so many instances in the past, it cunningly identifies itself with those who hosanna for freedom, the better to persuade them to fight with it against the "foes of liberty." Western history is a witness to this.

Following Constantine's edict, Papal Christianity unloosed such terror that in no time it stamped out the surviving creeds of the Greco-Roman world. In the Dark and Middle Ages whoever dared to think independently of Catholicism was mercilessly silenced by Catholic sword and fire. Following the birth of Protestantism, the Catholic Church, in its attempt to annihilate it, plunged Europe into a sea of blood.

Catholic Absolutism, owing to its ability to attack any man, culture, or civilization anywhere and at any time, if permitted to grow, will repeat all the horrors of the past, Catholicism and totalitarianism being indivisible. Like Siamese twins, the two cannot be separated. Catholicism, therefore, will automatically attack whatever is not Catholic. During the last few decades the Orthodox Church was selected as the chief target of a Catholic war which is far from having ended. Since the emergence on the world stage of Communism, the Catholic war on Protestantism has been apparently relaxed. Hence the absence of Protestant "Croatias." But to deduce from this that there will be no Protestant "Croatias" in the

future is not only absurd; it is as unreal as it is dangerous. There will be no Protestant "Croatias" as long as (a) Catholicism is not permitted to acquire total power; (b) it needs the support of powerful Protestant nations, such as the U.S.A.

Protestants ready to come to terms with it are preparing for suicide. For Catholic peace with them is anything but peace. It is not even an armistice. It is a deceptive lull which will be broken as soon as Catholicism has judged it safe to charge them with a brandished sword. Catholic anti-Protestant odium is burning now as ever. To believe that, because it is not visible, it is dead, is to be deceived. Catholic hatred is covered only by a layer of ashes. For the incautious that is proof that the fire was extinguished long ago. Yet, were its smouldering embers to be even slightly disturbed, unexpected flames would leap up with the ferocity and violence of old. Notwithstanding the overwhelming reasons which, since the advance of World Communism, have forced Catholicism to seek the alliance of Protestantism, Catholic anti-Protestant sentiment can still be seen at work, both in Europe and in the Americas. To be sure, it is not operating on a large scale. It is not even systematic. It is uneven, haphazard, occasional. Yet, for that very reason, the more significant, because when carefully scrutinized it emerges as a well-defined pattern—the pattern of a potential, full-blooded anti-Protestant persecution should Catholicism acquire all the power it acquired in Croatia.

Catholic acts of religious intolerance are taking place continually everywhere, notwithstanding the efforts of the Vatican to minimize their true meaning, or to hush them up lest they imperil its main strategy. They are as varied as they are numerous, ranging from hidden antagonism to killings, from petty individual hostility to organized mass persecution.

In Italy, for instance, the Waldenses, one of the oldest non-Catholic denominations, officially are protected by the law. Yet they are silently and persistently hindered in the exercise of their religion. Other Protestant denominations fare no better. Bans are placed upon them, under all kinds of excuses. Often to preach they must first get police permits. In 1947, Italy adopted a constitution guaranteeing freedom

of worship to all—but she neglected to repeal a Fascist law of 1929 prohibiting public worship by “cults” without police permission. If in any country it is necessary to go to the police for permission to worship publicly, then surely the constitutional guarantee is “but a mockery.”² Protestants in Italy had repeatedly to protest against the subtle anti-Protestant persecution in that country. In 1952 the Council of the Federation of Evangelical Churches addressed the Italian Prime Minister, expressing “the deep apprehensions of Protestants at the absence of all mention of the protection of free expression of religious thought in the new plans for a law for the repression of activities likely to hinder democratic liberties,” and deploring “the number of recent cases of intolerance and violation of religious liberty.”³

Cases of intolerance often meant refusal to permit Protestants to open their own schools or churches, and even orders to close their chapels. The following case needs no comment:

“The American Church of Christ was blocked in an attempt today to conduct Protestant Services here, in defiance of a police ban, by a force of 20 uniformed and plain-clothes men, who stopped all who attempted to enter the building, and seized an American and an Italian passer-by . . . the friction arose from evangelical activities by the church in trying to convert Italians to the Protestant faith. The church at Alessandria was closed a week ago, and the police ordered the Rome church closed today, threatening to take similar action against all other Churches of Christ.”⁴

That was not all. A few days later:

“The congregation of the Protestant Church of Christ, in Rome, drove into the country outside the Italian capital this morning to hold a religious service. Their city church was closed today and under police guard, as it was last Sunday, because the pastor, Mr. Cline Paden, of Texas, has not received a permit to preach but has expressed his determination to go ahead with his ministry.

“Today police again barred all seeking entry to the church. When the congregation, in taxi cabs and private cars, made for the open country, the procession was followed by a police car as far as the city boundary. A service was eventually held in the

village of San Cesareo, some 20 miles west of Rome, in a disused factory.

"Mr. Paden saw the United States Ambassador in Rome, Mr. Bunker, earlier this week and was assured that 'both the Embassy and the State Department are taking the liveliest interest in the matter of religious liberty and that the Italian Government has been so advised.' . . .

"Religious permits for non-Roman Catholic bodies are not easy to procure, and it is often months, and even years, before they are obtained.

"Other Protestant denominations in Italy are also reporting trouble. The Baptists, who are both licensed and recognized to preach, had their church at Miglianico, on the Adriatic coast, closed recently by the police. It has not been reopened. . . .

"The Pentecostal Church, largely supported by Canadian funds, applied for a licence for preaching *more than two years ago*. It still has not been sanctioned. Other bodies, such as the Seventh Day Adventists and the Assembly of God, are apparently also suffering from police interference in varying degrees."⁵

The next week, other Protestant bodies came to the fore :

"The Italian Protestant group known as the Assembly of God, which has its parent body in the United States, disclosed today that an Italian lawyer, Signor Rosapepe, left for Washington yesterday to make a personal appeal to Mr. Acheson to intervene in defence of the rights of Italian Evangelical groups to 'full religious toleration.'

"The Assembly of God has also begun . . . pressing charges against the Italian Ministry of the Interior that the latter 'has refused to act on our application for State recognition, in spite of our numerous requests during the past four years.'

"The Assembly of God gives a list of 38 of its churches which have been closed within the past 12 months and also refers to the case of a municipality which refused to provide water for a particular house because a Protestant minister lived there."⁶

All this in a country guaranteeing equality of religions.

In other lands Protestants are still considered social outcasts—e.g. in Fascist Spain, where most of the Protestant churches were closed, and no Protestant meetings allowed in the greater part of the country. The Bible was not per-

mitted to be either printed or circulated, except for the Catholic version, with notes. About two-thirds of Spanish pastors and evangelists were exiled or imprisoned. Children of Protestant parents were compelled to learn the Catholic catechism. In many places attendance at Mass was compulsory to procure employment.⁷

In an address to the British House of Lords, executives of the World Evangelical Alliance stated that whereas "in Spain, after long years of religious oppression, Protestants enjoyed during the Republican Government full liberty of conscience and worship . . . under the regime of General Franco religious liberty does not exist, although General Franco promised through the present Spanish Ambassador at the Court of St. James's, the Duke of Alba, that in the event of a Nationalist victory in the late Spanish war, he would grant full religious liberty to all classes and creeds alike in Spain."⁸

Under the Catholic Fascist Dictatorship in Spain, the Catholic Church, feeling more secure than in a Catholic Italy governed by coalitions, did not hesitate, in a hierarchy fashion, to issue pastoral letters inciting Catholics to fight and destroy Protestantism—e.g. Cardinal Segura's. The Cardinal's letter was not exceptional. To quote the sober *Times*, it was "one of the Cardinal's regular warnings against the alleged menace of Protestant proselytism in Spain."⁹ In it the Cardinal accused the civil authorities of "advancing openly into the field of religious freedom,"⁹ adding that some people in Spain had already gone so far as to believe "that all religions are equally acceptable in the presence of God."¹⁰ The Cardinal told Spain that toleration would never do.¹⁰

On May 27, 1923, Protestant Bibles were burned in Rome; in 1932 Protestant Gospels were publicly burned in Dublin; in 1940 Franco had more than 100,000 Protestant Bibles destroyed or burned in Spain. In Seville, Spain, in March, 1952, after a Protestant chapel was set on fire by Catholic Action members, the Catholics, to quote the words spoken officially in the House of Commons, "made an attempt to burn the Protestant clergyman himself, to shouts of 'The Protestants are finished!'"¹¹ This occurred when a gang of

well-dressed men burst into the tiny "secluded Protestant chapel of St. Basil, struck Pastor Santos Martin Molin in the face, poured gasoline over the altar, and tried to set the church afire." ¹²

This was not the only concrete result of Cardinal Segura's pastoral letters. Others followed in various parts of Spain. Witness the following :

"The police at Badajoz have arrested 21 students of a Marist Brothers' school who presented themselves in a menacing way at the home of a local Protestant pastor and in his absence ransacked the adjoining Evangelical chapel which had been closed since 1949. They removed a quantity of hymn books and leaflets, which they burned on a bonfire outside." ¹³

Such acts occur not only in Fascist Spain; but also in democratic France. In 1951 the French Hierarchy, after having promoted a campaign against "Father Christmas," a "Protestant institution," organized an *auto-da-fé* during which an image of Father Christmas was publicly burned before Dijon Cathedral. ¹⁴

In the Western Hemisphere many Protestants and Liberals seem to be convinced that, though religious intolerance may be expected in Europe, it cannot occur in the New World.

That is dangerous ignorance. As wherever there are Catholics, there is bound to be intolerance and potential persecution. This is borne out by hard reality. Catholic intolerance has raised its head in the Americas in the past. It is raising it now in the present. Whenever sufficiently strong, it will persecute Protestants as in Europe. Witness certain countries of Latin America. In Colombia, where, at the very threshold of the second half of the twentieth century, Catholic despotism "made the much-publicized persecutions in Spain seem mild as a May breeze," ¹⁵ the persecutions of Protestants have as definite a pattern as those of Europe. They were directed against Protestants of all denominations, and as in Spain and Croatia, most of them were carried out by the national police, who often acted under instructions from local priests. Thirty per cent of the cases connected with attacks on Protestant Churches were directly instigated by Catholic priests. ¹⁶

The Catholic Hierarchy preached hatred, inciting to physical violence against all Protestants. Two quotations should suffice. Were they not from Colombia, they could easily be mistaken as coming direct from Pavelic's Croatia. The first is from *El Catolicismo*, April 18, 1952: "We Catholics are under *the absolute obligation* to fight against the Protestant sects, or we will have fall on us the anathema of Christ." The second from *El Colombiano*, April 1, 1952: "It is imperative to adopt right now an attitude of energetic firmness similar to that which Spain adopted in the sixteenth century." ¹⁷

What was meant by "energetic firmness"? Action, such as closing the Protestant schools in various cities, a measure which the Colombian Government's newspaper, *El Siglo*, termed "opportune, just and healthful." ¹⁸

While Protestant schools were closed, Catholic schools were instilling into Colombian youth anti-Protestant venom. Children had to learn a twenty-stanza song called *El Protestantismo*. Sample:

"With a plate of food,
You corrupt the hungry ones;
Just wait—in the life to come
You will pay with torment." ¹⁹

This odium was not confined to schools. In 1951, for instance, a priest-led gang of children stoned the Presbyterian church at Ibagué, and another priest-led gang of children attacked the Pentecostal church at Bucaramanga. Police stood by as a mob attacked Sunday worshippers and stabbed a man; police themselves kicked and insulted a Protestant for having Protestant books in his suitcase.

In 1950 Catholic priests had all religious worship other than Catholic banned in the Caqueta territory of South-East Colombia, and violators were fined 100 pesos or imprisoned for fifty days.

Inquisitorial fires were lit in the American Hemisphere as they were in Europe. Thus, whereas in 1949 all Protestant Bibles were burned in Toribio Cauca, Colombia, in May, 1950, more Protestant Bibles were burned at La Aguado Casanare, again in Colombia.

Bibles make a good bonfire, but not as good a bonfire as when Protestant buildings are burned down after being looted—e.g. at La Aguado Casanare, Colombia, where eight Protestant chapels were burned.

But if burnings, why not forced conversions? As in Croatia, so also here, non-Catholics were, in fact, forced to embrace the "true faith"—e.g. on December 4, 1949, when Protestants at Toribio Cauca were ordered to sign, under threat of death, a renunciation of their faith;²⁰ or on May 28, 1950, in Rio Manso, when all Protestants were compelled to attend Mass, *under threat of death*.

In the space of only a few months in 1952 Catholic persecution of Protestants in Colombia alone included: seizure of churches, several cases of destruction of Bibles, and burning of twenty-six Protestant homes.

Protestant clergy naturally are the most frequent victims. In 1951, 1952, and 1953 they were so persecuted and beaten up that Britain and the U.S.A. officially had to protest against it, in sharp contrast to the Vatican, which never uttered a word.

In three years there occurred hundreds of officially authenticated cases of violence throughout Colombia. In one single month (May, 1952) there were twenty cases of Catholic violence against Protestants,²¹ and ninety-four fully documented cases of persecutions in less than one year.

Catholic persecutions meant not only boycott, threats, stoning, and fire. They meant blood. The case of Jose Noel Luna is by no means exceptional. Jose Noel Luna, a young farmer, one day in May, 1952, went into the little Presbyterian church at Frias, in Central Colombia, to do a small repair job. He was giving some of his spare time to the upkeep of his church, of which he was an elder. Soon after Luna left "the police broke into the church, overturned the pulpit, dragged the Bible and all the Protestant literature they could find outside for burning. In the midst of their looting, Elder Luna returned. The police demanded that he know his religion and his politics. He acknowledged that he was a Protestant and a member of the Liberal Party. The police dragged him along with them. Minutes later, Luna crawled weakly to the house of a fellow Protestant. 'Pray

for me,' he gasped. 'Give me water.' The police, said Luna, had taken him a little distance down the road and stabbed him in the chest. Shortly afterwards, Presbyterian Luna died."²²

Luna was not the first to pay with his life. In the short space of three years twenty-five Protestant missionaries and communicants were killed by Catholics in Colombia.²³

How could such open and organized religious intolerance and crimes occur? The explanation is obvious. The Church had civil power at her disposal, e.g. the ultra-Conservative Government which went into office in 1949 was helped by the Catholic Church, not only through her influence in the ballot, but through the pulpits and through the bullets of militant Catholics. Within three years (1949-53) "over 30,000 people were killed in the civil strife that ensued."²⁴ In no time, police, the army, education, Government agencies, and, indeed, the very Government itself, became her tools. A novel interpretation of freedom of religion, guaranteed under the Colombian Constitution, came to the fore. This, it was officially explained, did not mean "freedom of propaganda." The result was that Protestants were forbidden to distribute literature, that Protestant radio programmes were banned from the air, and that "religious persecutions became an integral part of this turmoil."²⁵

The Catholic clergy inflamed the people day in and day out against Protestants, from the pulpit, from the Press, in the streets, in several instances urging police officers to become "more aggressive" and Catholic mobs to stone and intimidate Protestants.²⁶ Members of the Catholic Hierarchy were the leaders. Witness Bishop Miguel Angelo Builes, of Santa Rosa de Osos, who "recommended the extermination of all anti-Catholics, including members of the Liberal Party," and who strengthened such truly Catholic advice with pastoral letters in which he fulminated against Protestantism.²⁷ All this was in sharp contrast to the years prior to 1949, when Colombia, although for almost two decades ruled by a democratic and, indeed, mildly anti-clerical Government, enjoyed complete religious freedom.

Colombia was not an exception. It was a glaring instance

of a planned Catholic pattern throughout Central and South America. Such a pattern is clear and definable. As in Croatia or Fascist Spain, the Catholic Church identifies herself with political forces to carry out her religious persecutions. In Latin America, while she invariably fights liberal, democratic, and progressive movements or Governments, she stubbornly supports ultra-Conservative, anti-democratic, and, indeed, authoritarian forces and regimes. As religious liberty is invariably the keystone of all Liberal Governments, inversely religious intolerance is that of all the ultra-Conservative Governments which the Church supports.

This has been proved time and time again.

The belief that, while Catholicism dares to be so illiberal in Catholic Europe or in Catholic Latin America, it will not act in like manner in the Protestant countries of the North American continent is equally fallacious. Catholicism can be no less virulent in the North.

Canada is a case in point. There Catholicism, being still a minority (43 per cent of Canadians are Catholics—1953), pretends to accept religious tolerance. Yet in Quebec, where it is a majority (88 per cent), it has carried out, and is still carrying out, a steady persecution of non-Catholics by means of threats, boycott, arrests, mobbings, and beatings. This to such an extent that more than once non-Catholic bodies have appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada against the shocking misuse of the law in Catholic Quebec.²⁸

Catholic attempts to suppress religious liberty in that province are mostly carried out by the use or misuse of the law by Catholic judges, Catholic politicians, and Catholic police. Failing that, Catholic priests very often do not hesitate to employ threats to incite the mob, and, indeed, often violence.

In St. Eustache, not far from Montreal, a group of non-Catholics were arrested and held under a high bail on the extraordinary charge that "in the town of St. Eustache, contrary to the said city, they did circulate in the streets of the town, stopping from house to house, to teach the Bible . . . contrary to the Criminal Code." There was nothing in the Code about this, and the case was dismissed.²⁹

In Val d'Or, Quebec, thirty-one regular Baptists were

persecuted and arrested by the Catholics for "holding street meetings." ³⁰

Catholic priests very often influence the action of the police to discriminate against Protestants. This fact is known to everyone, but is seldom acknowledged in public. Why, priests even act in place of the police itself. In Val Senneville, a village in Northern Quebec, non-Catholics were ordered out of the village by the local Catholic priest and declared to be under arrest, on the ground that they were trying to lead Catholics into error. Asked on what authority he made the arrest, the Catholic priest as a concrete reply pulled out a pair of handcuffs and phoned the police. The police refused to come. Thereupon the priest, having summoned a mob of about fifty Catholic men, openly threatened the non-Catholics with violence by saying, "You will either get out of this town or I will turn the mob on you and you may not get out alive." ³¹

Physical violence is frequently used, as at Greenlay, Quebec, when a minister of a nearby congregation went to visit a member of his church living there. A Catholic crowd, inspired by the Catholic priest, surrounded the minister's car, threatening that unless he left immediately his car would be wrecked. Upon refusal, the Catholic priest ordered the mob to seize the minister, to collect stones, and to start throwing. The preacher was stoned, injured, and left bleeding. ³²

Cases of violence do not happen only in small villages ruled by the local Catholic clergy. They can happen in Quebec itself. In March, 1952, ministers of the Jehovah Witnesses were openly attacked there and badly beaten by some one hundred Catholic hoodlums. The fact was gleefully reported by *L'Action Catholique* and by the Canadian Catholic Press and even radio.

"With the coming of spring it appears that Jehovah's Witnesses have undertaken a new propaganda campaign in the old capital. However, the reception is not always warm, and five members of the sect, all men, were yesterday received in St. Fidele parish like dogs at a race-track. The soup was so hot, they had to ask the protection of the police to get out of the quarter. . . .

"The vicar was giving a catechism lesson to his pupils at the St. Fidele high school and told them that Jehovah's Witnesses were going around the parish distributing pamphlets. . . . When class was let out at 11.30 a.m. yesterday, the students saw five men going from door to door. . . . The students to the number of about a hundred hooted loudly. An avalanche of snowballs fell on the witnesses. Then blows followed. One of the witnesses was slightly injured in the face. (The facts here are nicely watered down to make it look as if the young thugs really didn't seriously damage anyone.) Then the five men began to retreat prudently toward their car. Since a group of boys was trying to turn the latter over on its side, the witnesses of Jehovah ran hastily toward a bus of the Quebec Power. The driver, fearing for the safety of his passengers, refused to let them in. The witnesses had to seek shelter in a hairdressing salon, whence they called for aid and protection of the police to enable them to get out of the quarter. . . . This is how a brusque ending came to an attempted propaganda campaign in Limoilou quarter. It is hoped that the Witnesses found the pill so bitter they won't come back." ³³

Catholics have been known to intercept mail and burn it, on the ground that it was Protestant literature. One case which, with all its implications, indicates more forcibly than anything else what would happen to all Protestants, in Quebec as in the rest of Canada, were the Catholic Church to feel sufficiently strong, is the following, quoted from the *Montreal Herald*:

"Rev. Alfred Roy, a Roman Catholic priest, *has admitted burning religious pamphlets mailed to Baptists*. The statement was made by postal inspector W. L. Gagne, sent to this North-western Quebec community (Rouyn) to investigate charges made by the Baptist pastor, L. G. Barnhart, of nearby Noranda. Barnhart charged that religious pamphlets addressed to Baptists in Ste. Germaine Boule . . . failed to reach their destination. Gagne said the postmaster . . . Wilfred Begin, had admitted holding up delivery of the pamphlets on orders from Father Roy. Begin has been relieved of his office. . . . Inspector Gagne said Father Roy had told him he burned the mail because the letters, consisting of mimeographed sermons by Pastor Barnhart . . . 'would give people wrong ideas.'" ³⁴

By 1953 Canada had six million Catholics, or less than half of the total population. And yet this Catholic fraction was attempting to stamp out religious toleration. In Quebec, of course, the whole province is *de facto* under the thumb of the Catholic Hierarchy. That Quebec happens also to be the most illiberal province of Canada is by no means a coincidence.

"*Liberty of conscience is basic to all other liberties,*" and, "without freedom in religion, democratic institutions cannot survive."³⁵ Catholicism is a destroyer of civil liberties because it is the unscrupulous foe of liberty of conscience.

In many Catholic countries the word "Protestant," for instance, has been transformed into a synonym of such vilifications as "libertines," "traitors," or, if female, "woman of easy virtue," in Fascist Franco's Spain,³⁶ or of "Liberal (*sic*)," in Colombia, while in Protestant countries anyone opposed to Catholicism and its lay economic or political allies is labelled a "Communist," and hence as a saboteur and spy, and treated as such.

In the U.S.A., within a few years following the Second World War, all the most glorious traditions of the Republic have been so weakened that the very survival of true American democracy, so largely inspired by Protestant and Liberal ideals, is a matter of speculation. That the most untiring enemies of true American freedom are mostly Catholics—of whom "Character-assassin," Senator McCarthy, is one—indicates that, as always, the policy of the Catholic Church is the relentless undermining of the democratic institutions, with their ultimate destruction in view.

So successful has it been that in a short period the U.S.A. has witnessed "perhaps the most widespread suppression of views" in its history, as Supreme Court Justice W. O. Douglas had publicly to admit: "from fear of being dismissed from employment, banned from radio work, disqualified from teaching, or unacceptable for lecture platforms. Those sanctions being as effective and powerful . . . as a fine or a jail sentence."³⁷

The tool employed has been the fear of Communism.

As in the case of Fascist Italy in the early 'twenties, of Nazi Germany in the 'thirties, of Franco's Spain from 1936 to 1939,

of Pavelic's Croatia from 1941 to 1945, so following the Second World War the Catholic Church set out to "save Christian civilization."

The Catholic Church not only tries to sap the liberties of a democratic people, as in the U.S.A., to stultify judicial power, as in Canada, or overtly to employ the police, as in Colombia: but in the last resort she will not hesitate to impose herself by the force of arms. Witness the Spanish internecine strife she promoted, which cost one million dead; or the civil war in Mexico which she had also brought about; or as in Croatia; or, indeed, the raising of Catholic levies even in a non-Christian Continent—e.g. Asia, where in 1953 Catholic priests and friars were leading Catholic terrorist bands, Ustashi fashion, in Indo-China, again "to save Christian civilization." To name only one, Father Garcia, who, with a dozen of other Catholic priests, having formed their own well-armed Catholic militia, set out to impose Catholic terror with fire and with the sword wherever they went. This was not left only to the lower clergy. Members of the Catholic Hierarchy came into the field—e.g. a Catholic bishop, an ex-Trappist, who had raised a private army of some ten thousand men: i.e. Bishop Le Huu Tu of Phat-Diem, as he was then called, who ruled the region of that name with "almost medieval powers."³⁸

The Vatican's promotion of anti-Communist crusades, "to save Christian civilization," a policy it launched during the First World War, while genuinely meant to check Communist progress, is simultaneously directed at destroying its rivals. Its anti-Communist fight, consequently, is not a fight to save the liberties of the West; it is a fight to preserve the West for Catholic domination.

Wherever Catholicism has succeeded in crushing its Communist enemy, there, instead of the expected flourishing of the promised liberties, the lights of freedom have been ruthlessly extinguished by Catholic chicanery, as intolerant as that red tyranny which it so loudly proclaims to be the true enemy of freedom.

The few facts mentioned above show that wherever Catholicism waxes strong liberties wane. Among them, the liberty of all free men to think and believe what they judge

to be true. Protestantism, which champions religious liberty, would be the first victim of Catholic supremacy.

Were therefore Catholicism to acquire power, it would not hesitate to strike at all Protestants with the same ferocity with which it struck at the Orthodox in Croatia.

To destroy one enemy of freedom by strengthening another is not to defend freedom. It is to prepare its total suppression. For freedom, to be genuine, cannot be either qualified or conditioned to any religious or political system. To restrict freedom is to betray it. Today, Catholic authoritarianism is burrowing within contemporary society in the name of freedom, seemingly championing those very liberties in which it has never believed, with the precise objective of planting its iron heel upon contemporary man.

Catholics, as members of a Church tirelessly hostile to freedom, are, therefore, the most perilous enemies of all those religious and political tenets without which no democracy can flourish. Indeed, it can be truly asserted that, as the blind instruments of their Church, they form internationally the *most anti-democratic party in the world*. Now, perhaps even more than in the past, they are stubbornly carrying out a silent global struggle against that very society which they are so boisterously pretending to defend, but which in reality they are feverishly undermining, the better to capture it from within. This they do through the vigorous acquisition of political and economic power. Such power spells religious control—that is, Catholic domination. Hence their indefatigable exertions and astounding rise in contemporary world politics.

Political supreme Catholic power means Catholic authoritarianism—that is, tyranny. Where there is tyranny, freedom is dead. A society deprived of freedom, instead of moving forward, will move backward. When inoculated with the Catholic bacillus, it will turn into the most abominable of all despotisms.

Should Catholicism be permitted to acquire power with the speed with which it has gained it during the last few decades, then the repetition of the Ustashi experiment upon a greater scale will become, not a possibility, but a certainty.

In such a Catholic-dominated society all not conforming to

Catholic tenets would be mercilessly harried out of existence. Worse still, all the aspirations, hopes, and beliefs of modern man would be ruthlessly reduced, thwarted, and destroyed. Indeed, the very foundations of civilization ultimately would be made to tumble.

For, verily, in such a society the Catholic Church would swiftly convert herself into the most powerful engine of spiritual aggression that the world has ever seen, *to subvert the present in order to conquer the future, there to implant all the darkness and the terror of the past.*

REFERENCES

CHAPTER II

¹ Milan Marjanovic: "Frankovci u Javnom Zivotu Hrvatske. Javnost," *Les partisans de Frank dans la vie publique de Croatie*, No. 160, 1936. See *Assassins au Nom de Dieu*, Hervé Laurière, Editions "La Vigie," Paris 1951.

² *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, XXXIII, No. 12,402.

³ "The close understanding of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff with their German colleagues has been documented."—*The Times in Peace and War*, published 1952.

⁴ *Diplomatische Aktenstücke*, Part I, p. 31.

⁵ See Conrad's Memoirs, *Aus Meiner Dienstzeit* (My Years of Service).

⁶ Count Forgach related this to Baron Szilassi at the Ballplatz.

⁷ Correspondence of the Austro-Hungarian Embassy. First brought to light and published by Count Carlo Sforza, Italy's Foreign Minister. See also his book, *Contemporary Italy*, London, 1946.

⁸ Dispatch of Count Palffy, Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at the Vatican, to Count Berchtold, dated July 29, 1914, and deposited in the diplomatic correspondence of the Austro-Hungarian Embassy in Rome. First brought to light and published by Count Carlo Sforza, Italy's Foreign Minister. See also his book, *Contemporary Italy*, London, 1946.

CHAPTER III

¹ The Spaniards and the French, on the other hand, were convinced that God, and hence His representative on Earth, must speak French. During the previous conclave following the death of Pope Leo XIII, one Spanish Cardinal, having addressed the Patriarch of Venice and the latter having replied that he did not speak French, commented that in that case he could not become a Pope. "Thank God," sighed the Patriarch of Venice. But the Patriarch became Pope Pius X, and the Spanish Cardinal his future Secretary of State, Cardinal Merry del Val.

² For more details, see *The Times in Peace and War*, 1952.

³ During the First World War these rumours were never substantiated. The plan for Poland, however, was later confirmed to the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Sforza, by Baron Monti, friend of Benedict XV. See *Contemporary Italy*, by Sforza. One of the formulators of the Note was the General of the Jesuits, Ledokowski.

CHAPTER IV

- ¹ See *Contemporary Italy*, by Count C. Sforza, 1946.
- ² See *Les Atrocités Polonaises en Galicie Ukrainienne*, by V. Tennytski, and *The Atrocities in the Ukraine*, by E. Revyuk, 1931.
- ³ See *La Question d'Ukraine*, by Rene Martel. Also *Le Monde Slave*, November, 1927.
- ⁴ For more details see *La France et la Pologne*, by Rene Martel, 1931.
- ⁵ See *Les Atrocités Polonaises en Galicie Ukrainienne*, by V. Tennytski.
- ⁶ *The Atrocities in the Ukraine*, by E. Revyuk, 1931.

CHAPTER V

- ¹ See *The Ciano Diaries*, 1946, pp. 46, 48, 50-60.

CHAPTER VI

- ¹ For more details of the Vatican's plan, see the author's *Catholic Imperialism and World Freedom*.
- ² The Chief of OVRA gave them all false passports and false names. Cernozemski was given two passports, one Czechoslovakian under the name of Suck, the other Hungarian under the name of Kalemén. Kralj became Silny and Mulny; Kvaternik became Kramer; Pospisil became Nowack, while Raitch became Benes, in order to embarrass Benes, the President of the Czech Republic.
- ³ To be eventually liberated by the Nazis in 1940.

CHAPTER VII

- ¹ See *The Ciano Diaries*, foreword by Sumner Welles, Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1946, pp. 46, 48-50, 60, 87, 97.
- ² *Memoire de l'Organisation Musulmane Yougoslave*, to the National Committee for Free Europe, New York, May, 1950.
- ³ W. D. Isla, *Commentaires sur les Problèmes Yougoslaves*, p. 45, Geneva, 1944.
- ⁴ See *Nedelja*, August 10, 1941.
- ⁵ See *Nedelja*, April 27, 1941.
- ⁶ Pius XII claimed to have seen Pius X during the conclave of 1939, and that the latter foretold him that he would become the next Pope. For more details, see *The Cross*, organ of the Passionist Fathers, Dublin, March, 1948.
- ⁷ This occurred on three successive days, October 30 and 31 and November 1, 1950. The official description of this repetitive miracle,

given by Pius XII's special delegate, Cardinal Tedeschini, was the following:

"The Holy Father (Pius XII) turned his gaze from the Vatican gardens to the sun, and there there was renewed for his eyes the prodigy of the Valley of Fatima. . . . He was able to witness the life of the sun under the hand of Mary. The sun was agitated, all convulsed, transformed into a picture of life; in a spectacle of celestial movements; in transmission of mute but eloquent messages to the Vicar of Christ."

Cardinal Tedeschini, at the Shrine of Fatima, Portugal, 13.10.1951. See world and Catholic Press, 14-15-16.10.1951.

For more details of the concocted papal visions and the political objectives of their manufacturers, see the author's *Catholic Imperialism and World Freedom* (Watts, 500 pp).

⁸ Words used by Pius XII, December 21, 1939, when blessing King Victor.

CHAPTER VIII

¹ *Katolicki List*, June 11, 1942.

² Speech by Dr. Mirko Puk, Minister of Justice and Religion. Excerpt from stenographic record of the proceedings of a regular session of the Croatian State Assembly, held in Zagreb, February 25, 1942.

³ All the crimes described in this book are authentic. For further atrocities of this kind, see the Memorandum sent to the General Assembly of U.N.O. in 1950 by A. Pribicevic, President of the Independent Democratic Party of Yugoslavia, and by Dr. V. Belajcic, former Justice of the Supreme Court of Yugoslavia. Also "Dokumenti", compiled by Joza Horvat and Zdenko Stambuk, Zagreb, 1946.

⁴ Statement made by witness Gjordana Friedlender, from the shorthand notes of the Ljubo Miloš case, pp. 292-3.

⁵ From shorthand notes of the Ljubo Miloš case.

⁶ Idem. See also official indictment of Ante Pavelic.

CHAPTER IX

¹ For further atrocities, see *Memorandum on Crimes of Genocide Committed against the Serbian People by the Government of the Independent State of Croatia during World War II*, dated October, 1950, sent to the President of the 5th General Assembly of the United Nations by Adam Pribicevic, President of the Independent Democratic Party of Yugoslavia; Dr. Vladimir Belajcic, former Justice of the Supreme Court of Yugoslavia; and Dr. Branko Miljus, former Minister of Yugoslavia.

² This event is described in his book, *The Concentration Camp at Jasenova*, p. 282. See also above Memorandum.

³ The eye-witness, Vojislav Zivanic (father, Duko; brother, Bogoljub) from Dukovsko, related these events under oath before a group of Serbs and Croats, among them Dr. Sekulich, General Mirkovic, and the author, at a meeting specially held on May 20, 1951, in London.

⁴ *Martyrdom of the Serbs*, p. 145, issued by the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese for the U.S.A. and Canada.

⁵ Eye-witness: Pritova, Bihac, Bosna.

⁶ See *Dokumenti o Protunarodnom Radu i Zlocinima Jednog Dijela Katolickog Klera*, Zagreb, 1946. Also above Memorandum to U.N.O.

⁷ *Assassins au Nom De Dieu*, Herve Lauriere, Paris, 1951.

⁸ See *Dokumenti o Protunarodnom Radu i Zlocinima Jednog Dijela Katolickog Klera*, Zagreb, 1946. Also file of Yugoslav State Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes.

⁹ Eye-witness: Stanko Sapitch, of Blakusa.

¹⁰ Evidence given by a survivor, Marija Bogunovitch.

CHAPTER XI

¹ See *Memorandum on Crimes of Genocide Committed against the Serbian People by the Government of the Independent State of Croatia during World War II*, dated October, 1950, sent to the President of the 5th General Assembly of the United Nations by Adam Pribicevic, President of the Independent Democratic Party of Yugoslavia; Dr. Vladimir Belajcic, former Justice of the Supreme Court of Yugoslavia; and Dr. Branko Miljus, former Minister of Yugoslavia.

² See also *Martyrdom of the Serbs*, p. 176.

³ For list of names of Catholic priests who personally committed such crimes, see *Martyrdom of the Serbs* (p. 176), prepared by the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese for the U.S.A. and Canada, Palandech's Press, Chicago, 1943. Archbishop Stepinac, had he been willing, could have punished them, with military sanctions, as their military vicar. It is sinisterly significant that the Vatican permitted Stepinac to become military vicar, in October, 1940, before Yugoslavia was invaded. See also *Tablet*, January 17, 1953.

⁴ *Katolicki Tjednik*, No. 35, August 31, 1941.

⁵ *Hrvatski Narod*, December 25, 1941; *Novi List*, November 10, 1942.

⁶ Filipovic was regarded as abnormal even by many of his Ustashi colleagues. All the cases just quoted are authenticated and can be found in the files of the Yugoslav State Commission for the Investigation of War Crimes.

⁷ Throughout Yugoslavia only six were left at their posts.

⁸ These losses include the whole of Yugoslavia. The largest proportion, however, were wilfully caused by Catholics in Croatia (figures published in *Glasnik*, official paper of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchy, 1951).

⁹ These are official figures, reputedly on the conservative side. The Serbian Orthodox Patriarchy estimated the killings at 1,200,000.

CHAPTER XII

¹ *Glasnik krizevacke nadbiskupije*, No. 2, 1942.

² Other clauses of the decree :

"3. Such missionaries shall be responsible only to the local church authorities or directly to the local Catholic priests.

"4. The Roman Catholic Church will recognize as binding only those conversions which have been made in accordance with these dogmatic principles.

"5. Secular authorities shall have no right to annul conversions made by the Church representatives.

"6. The Croatian Catholic Bishops constitute a directorium consisting of three persons . . . they are authorized to consult with the Minister of Religion on all questions relating to necessary and proper procedure. . . .

"9. Concerning the rites to be applied in the conversions, the Croatian Roman Catholic Bishops will adopt in full the rule prescribed by the Holy Congregation of the Eastern Church as of July, 1941, and which has been communicated to the President of the Bishops' Council. . . .

"10. The Committee of the Croatian Catholic Bishops for conversions will organize courses for those priests who are to act as instruments in the conversions of the Serbian Orthodox into the Catholic Church. In these courses they will receive both theoretical and practical instructions for their work."

³ The authenticity of his reply was personally confirmed by Dr. Grizogono's son, Dr. N. Grizogono, a practising Catholic. For further details, see *Ally Betrayed*, by David Martin, 1946. Archbishop Stepinac wrote to Pavelic about the conversion—more than once. See Mgr. Stepinac's long letter to Pavelic on the conversions, first translated and published by Hubert Butler.

CHAPTER XIII

¹ This was done ten days before the final collapse.

² Ustashi Ministers left their belongings in Stepinac's care. Minister Alajbegovic, later extradited by Anglo-American authorities and condemned to death in Zagreb on June 7, 1947, for instance, buried the files of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Archbishop's palace, while Pavelic himself had all the phonograph records of his own speeches carefully concealed among the files of Archbishop Stepinac's Spiritual Board in Zagreb.

³ Very often it was the other way round. This was openly admitted by American diplomats. For a frank appraisal of this American-Vatican intelligence traffic, see *Lying in State* (published 1952), the

Memoirs of Mr. Stanton Griffis, who was U.S. Ambassador in Warsaw in 1947 and 1948. In it Mr. Griffis describes how he transmitted letters from Polish bishops to the Vatican, giving the names of the Church's representatives, to whom he also handed sums of dollars, although the illegal possession of dollars was then considered a capital offence.

⁴ Stepinac's statement to a British liaison officer. See *New Statesman & Nation*, London, October 26, 1946.

⁵ For more details, see the author's *Catholic Imperialism and World Freedom* (Watts), Chapter 20, "The Spectacular Case of Cardinal Mindszenty."

⁶ See announcement in *Osservatore Romano*, also *Universe*, June 10, 1949.

⁷ For more details of the Vatican's activities with the U.S.A. at this period, see the author's *Catholic Imperialism and World Freedom* (Watts), Chapter 4, "Papal Promotion of Contemporary Religious Superstition for Political Purposes."

⁸ See *The Times*, London, August 28, 1950. Also the *New York Times*.

CHAPTER XIV

¹ In the words of Marshal Tito:

"When the Pope's representative to our Government, Bishop Hurley, paid me his first visit, I raised the question of Stepinac. 'Have him transferred from Yugoslavia,' I said, 'for otherwise we shall be obliged to place him under arrest.' We waited four months without receiving any reply."

Tito, Zagreb, October 31, 1946.

² This was later confirmed by Stepinac himself, when, during an interview with C. L. Sulzberger, of the *New York Times*, having been told that Marshal Tito was willing to set him free or to transfer him to a monastery, Stepinac replied that "whether or not I shall resume my office, whether I go to a monastery or whether I remain here (in prison) depends only upon the Holy Father. Such things do not depend upon Marshal Tito. They depend *only* upon the Holy Father, the Pope, and upon no one else." See also *Universe*, November 17, 1950. This policy subsequently led to the breaking of Yugoslav/Vatican diplomatic relations (December 18, 1952) prior to and after Stepinac being made a Cardinal (January, 1953) and the projected visit of Marshal Tito to Britain in 1953. In an attempt to embarrass the British Government and the United Nations, the British Hierarchy attacked the Marshal as a persecutor of Catholics. At the same time an effort was made to whitewash Stepinac. Articles with these aims appeared in the *Tablet* and were reprinted in pamphlet form by the "Sword of the Spirit." These efforts would have been comic, if the British public had not been ready to believe them.

³ The U.S.A. began war preparations less than one year after Hitler's death (1945). These consisted of stock-piling essential raw materials, a 100 per cent war measure. On July 23, 1946, the U.S.A. passed Public Law 520 of the 79th Congress, approved by both Houses, for this purpose. The combined stock-piling in 1946 stood already at 4,536,000,000 dollars. From 1946 to 1950, before the Korean war began in June, the U.S.A. stock-pile stood at 8,300,000,000 dollars. No figures were available from the U.S.S.R.

⁴ Owing to the split of Communist Yugoslavia from Soviet Russia, Yugoslavia became financially and militarily partially dependent upon the U.S.A. American loans were asked for and granted. Tito himself publicly acknowledged that Yugoslavia had received over 1,000-million dollars' worth of aid from the West (Marshal Tito, Belgrade, March 16, 1952). The Vatican attempted to influence the negotiations, via Catholic pressure in the U.S.A., putting as a condition the *unconditional* release of Archbishop Stepinac.

⁵ See *The Times*, London, November 10, 1952.

⁶ Officially disclosed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Paris, November 25, 1952. This did not include the many bases in Britain, North Africa, Greece, and Turkey.

See *The Times*, London, *Manchester Guardian*, November 26, 1952, *New York Times*, and other papers.

⁷ Published in the Ustashi paper, *Danitz*, Chicago, Ill., No. 13, IX, 1950.

⁸ Franco's Catholic Spain, after the defeat of Nazi Germany, gave asylum to numerous Nazi leaders and war criminals—e.g. Dr. Schacht, Hitler's Finance Minister; Otto Skorzeny, the S.S. Agent who rescued Mussolini in 1943; Von Papen, Vice Chancellor under Chancellor Hitler in 1933. It is noteworthy that Catholic Von Papen, like many Ustashi leaders, used a religious smoke-screen to carry out renewed Nazi intrigues for the revival of European Fascism. E.g. when ostensibly a private participant in the Eucharistic Congress in Barcelona, he had lengthy private interviews with General Franco (May, 1952). See Nazi plot in West Germany, 1953, *et sequitur*, *The Times*, etc.

⁹ Pavelic reached Buenos Aires on November 6, 1948, on the Italian passenger ship, *s.s. Sestriere*, under the name of Dal Aranyos. His ticket was No. 16. The Argentine Legation in Rome knew his real identity very well. It had repeatedly been pressed by the Vatican authorities to grant Pavelic a visa. The Argentine Co-ordination Federal, the counter-espionage police, had also been informed in advance of his identity.

¹⁰ Intelligence reports, files of the Yugoslav Government. "Pavelic, Dr. Ante—Some Biographical Notes and Activities since 1945."

¹¹ This priest served in the Catholic Church in Avenida Belgrano, No. 1151, Buenos Aires. See the Yugoslav Government's official indictment of Ante Pavelic.

¹² Consisting of twelve chests of gold and one chest of jewellery. This according to the official statement of the Yugoslav Government in its indictment of Ante Pavelic.

¹³ *Dinamica Social*, Nos. 5 and 6, 1951.

¹⁴ See *Manchester Guardian*, July 22, 1952.

¹⁵ Wire sent by Pope Pius XII to General Eisenhower, to which the President-elect replied: "Profoundly grateful to Your Holiness for your blessing and expression of goodwill." See *Universe*, November 14, 1952.

CHAPTER XV

¹ Within a few years (1945-50), in fact, Political Catholicism was in control of ten European Governments, i.e.

Austria: Dr. Leopold Figl, Chancellor.

Belgium: Gaston Eyskens, Prime Minister.

France: Georges Bidault, Prime Minister; Robert Schuman, Foreign Minister.

Germany: Dr. Konrad Adenauer, Chancellor.

Ireland: John A. Costello, Prime Minister.

Italy: Alcide de Gasperi, Prime Minister.

Luxembourg: Pierre Dupong, Prime Minister.

Netherlands: J. R. H. van Schaik, Vice-Premier.

Portugal: Marshal Antonio Carmona, President; Dr. Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, Prime Minister.

Spain: General Francisco Franco, Chief of State.

² Glen L. Archer, Executive Director, P.O.A.U. See *Churchman*, November 1, 1952.

³ See *Churchman*, New York, October 1, 1952.

⁴ As described by the special correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, London, September 15, 1952.

⁵ As described by the correspondent of *The Times*, London, September 22, 1952.

⁶ *The Times*, London, September 26, 1952.

⁷ Official charges of the World Evangelical Alliance, brought before the British House of Lords in May, 1944. See *Daily Telegraph*, September 5, 1944.

⁸ Idem.

⁹ *The Times*, London, March 15, 1952.

¹⁰ *Time*, March 7, 1952.

¹¹ See *The Times*, London, April 1, 1952, report of the debate in the House of Commons.

¹² See *Time*, March 7, 1952.

¹³ See *The Times*, London, April 17, 1952.

¹⁴ The burning was directed by Abbé Nourissat, of the Church of St. Benigne, Dijon, France. For further details, see the author's *Catholic Imperialism and World Freedom* (Watts), Chapter 17, "The Vatican against Protestantism."

¹⁵ Henry McCorkle, in *Presbyterian Life*, June, 1952. See also *Time*, June 30, 1952.

¹⁶ Report of the Colombian Confederation of Evangelical Churches. See also the *Churchman*, New York, November 15, 1952.

¹⁷ See statement concerning religious persecutions of the Protestant Churches in Colombia, by Dr. Rycroft, Secretary for Latin America of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., to the *New York Times*. See also the *Churchman*, New York, November 15, 1952.

¹⁸ See *New York Times*, October 20, 1952.

¹⁹ See *Time*, June 30, 1952.

²⁰ See *Christian Science Monitor*, September 12, 1950.

²¹ Official statistics issued by the Evangelical Confederation of Colombia, representing seventeen Protestant denominations with missions in Colombia. See also *Time*, June 30, 1952. Also statement by Dr. W. S. Rycroft, Secretary for Latin America of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. See the *Churchman*, New York, November 15, 1952.

²² *Time*, June 30, 1952.

²³ *Time*, June 30, 1952. Also declaration of the Evangelical Confederation of Colombia, June, 1952.

²⁴ Dr. W. S. Rycroft, Secretary for Latin America of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. See the *Churchman*, New York, November 15, 1952.

²⁵ *Idem*.

²⁶ A typical instance was that of a family of Protestants being warned by an Inspector of Police that "if they did not want to suffer they should display the pictures of Laureano Gomez and of the Pope on the front door. Because of such threats the family left shortly afterwards." See the *Churchman*, New York, November 1, 1952.

²⁷ See newspaper, *El Nacional*, sundry numbers in January, 1952. Also advertising by the National Association of Evangelicals. Also *Universe*, February 1, 1952.

²⁸ The most notorious was Catholic bigot Maurice Duplessis, Quebec's dictator-premier, who specialized in persecuting the Jehovah's Witnesses. Case taken to the Supreme Court of Canada in 1946.

²⁹ Officially reported by the Jehovah's Witnesses. See *Awake*, October 22, 1952.

³⁰ *Universe*, October 27, 1950.

³¹ A charge of intimidation under the Criminal Code against the Catholic priest was eventually made. See *Awake*, October 22, 1952.

³² *Idem*.

³³ *L'Action Catholique*, March 28, 1952.

³⁴ See *Montreal Herald*, September 30, 1951. Also *Time*, August 27, 1951.

³⁵ As a Committee on Civil and Religious Liberty of the United Church of Canada also reported. See the *Churchman*, December 1, 1952.

³⁶ *Time*, March 7, 1952.

³⁷ Supreme Court Justice W. O. Douglas, after receiving the

reward R. T. L. Terbach, for service in the cause of freedom. New York, December 4, 1952.

³⁸ See *The Times*, London, December 13, 1951. See also *Universe*, December 12, 1952. Also Indo-Chinese Press. Also archives of War Ministry, Paris.

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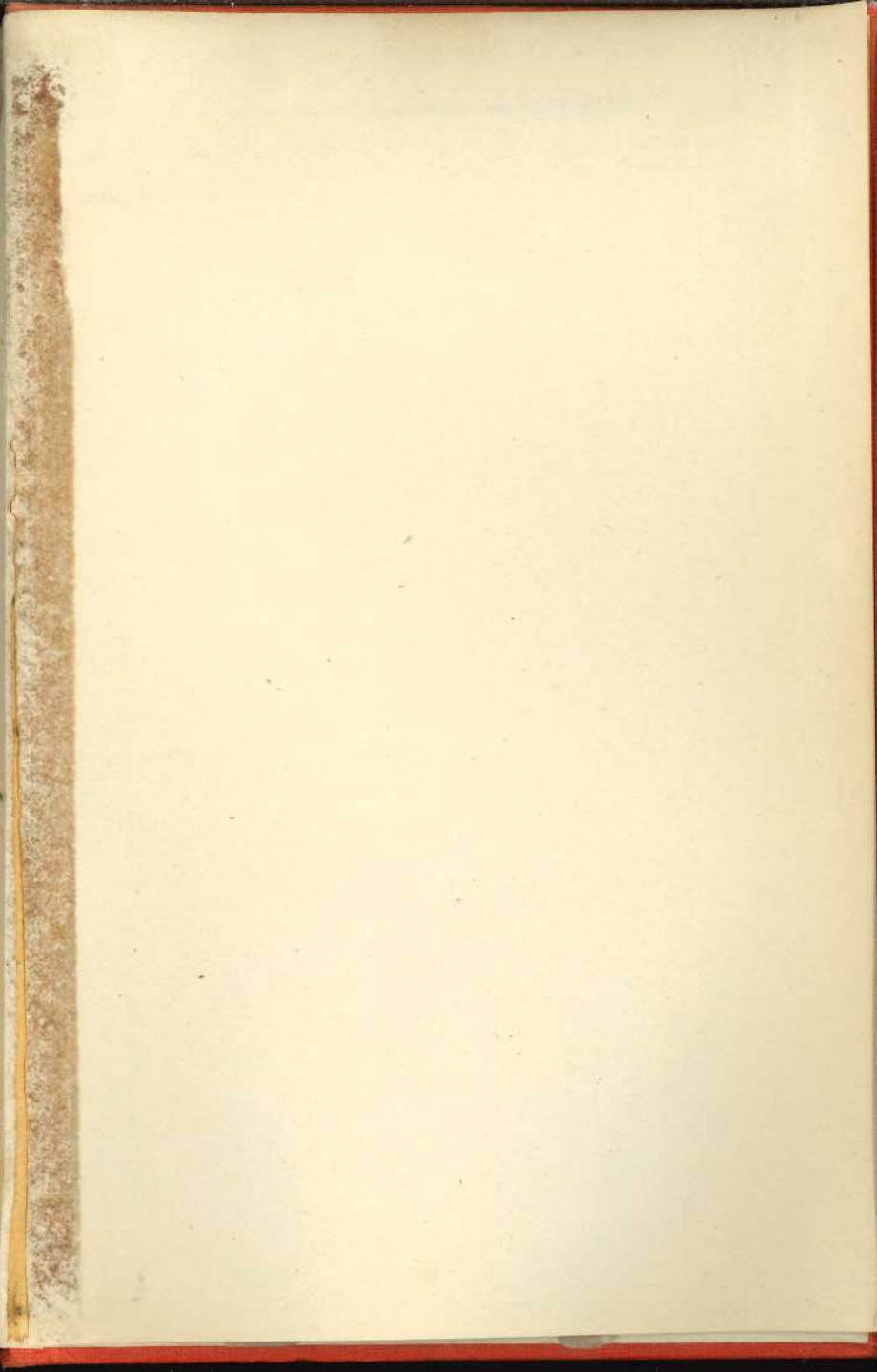
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